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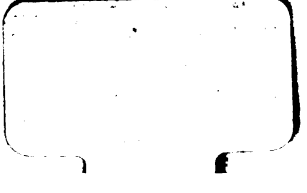

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NAS

TWO COMRADES

BY

ELLEN HAYES
AUTHOR OF "LETTERS TO A COLLEGE GIRL"

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1912

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Come, join in the only battle
wherein no man can fail,
Where whoso fadeth and dieth,
yet his deed shall still prevail.

—William Morris.

He who opens his eyes to the possibilities of evolution in their endless variety will abhor fraud and violence and will disdain prosperity at the expense of his fellow creatures.

—Svante Arrhenius.

PREFACE

THIS little book was entirely ready for the press last January, and is now published without change. It seems necessary to make this prefatory statement lest it be supposed that its writing was occasioned by certain newspaper criticisms of a speech which I made at a mass meeting in Lawrence, Massachusetts, at the beginning of the eighth week of the memorable strike of the textile workers of that city. I may add that the book was written distinctly for purposes of propaganda, with the hope that it may serve in some measure to interest young people—and perhaps older ones—in what is today the greatest movement of the civilized world. I trust that those who meet *Two Comrades* may be led to read other Socialist books and to realize

"That the Dawn and the Day is coming,
and forth the Banners go."

E. H.

WELLESLEY, May 22, 1912.

TWO COMRADES

CHAPTER I.

"CALLING a fellow a coward doesn't prove that he is a coward." The words came clear and strong from a slender but determined-looking boy backed up against the maple tree near the schoolhouse. Of the group that surrounded him some started to shoulder him away from the tree, while others shook their fists in his face. At that moment a bell rang; the boys stopped their bluster and streamed into the building.

The Boy Scout Movement had reached Hillsburg. "If the President and the Governor endorse it, it must be all right," said the people who usually looked to persons of position for their opinions. The school superintendent and the director of the Y. M. C. A. united in setting forth the advantages that the movement held for "our boys." Business men contributed liberally for uniforms and the Ladies' Union Missionary

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a number of men and a few women regularly gathered. Curiously enough, this company included all of the fathers and some of the mothers of those boys who were not permitted to wear soldier leggings.

The glory of the army and navy getting no response from their stubborn mate, the boys tried coaxing.

"Aw! Adams, come on! We want you."

Their entreaties reached a climax when the second officer in a sudden fit of self-denial burst out with, "I say, Adams, if you will only join you may carry my sword sometimes, and command, you know."

"Thank you. I don't want to carry your sword."

It was then that the stinging word, "coward," "coward," was flung at him, and then that Ned braced himself against the friendly maple and flung back his reply: "Calling a fellow a coward doesn't prove that he is a coward!"

Possibly it didn't, but Jim Pierson, whose brains had run to muscle, could hardly grasp the force of Ned's brief argument. Somehow it was

an argument, though it sounded so like a challenge. He decided to give Ned Adams a public "thrashing" if he persisted in refusing to drill. It was Jim's intention to slip up behind the unsuspecting boy and "hit him a clip"—thump him until he agreed either to fight or to join the scouts. This manly program appealed to Jim as entirely justifiable, considering the inportance of securing recruits for the boy scouts. Fighting was strictly forbidden on the school grounds, but the big boy openly boasted that the fight would come off somewhere else.

Each day when school closed it was Ned Adams' practice to hurry down to the railroad station to meet the afternoon train that brought him a roll of papers from a distant city. Besides the city dailies he usually carried a few copies of another paper, a weekly. "Have a *Coming Nation* today?" he would ask his customers in such a frank, friendly way that at first they bought the paper because they liked the boy; and later, because they liked the paper, too.

"Here, bring me that paper regular; we want

it," said one person and another. He was at length known as "the *Coming Nation* boy."

The long round usually took over an hour; then Ned went home to start the fire and set the table so that there would be less for his mother to do when she came. The two of them lived in three little rooms over the millinery store, and each tried to help the other to see the best in their quarters.

"We get fine sunshine, don't we, Ned. See how these geraniums thrive."

"Yes, and we're not over the meat market or the restaurant. Whatever the ladies' hats look like, at least they're not smelly," returned Ned. Mrs. Adams had further reasons for being glad that they did not live over the restaurant where she worked every week-day from half-past seven in the morning until six at night. "Fresh air, even though it is the town variety, is a precious thing, Ned. I am glad to be out in it twice a day."

On the evening of this particular day when the boys had made their final effort to get Ned to join the scouts he sat at the supper table in a meditative silence that was unusual. Finally he

spoke. "Mother, do you s'pose there have ever been any cowards in our family?"

"I don't know. I hope not. Why do you ask?"

Ned told her why; then he added, "Well, if we've ever had a coward it wasn't father, anyhow."

"No, it was not your father," and they both looked up at a framed photograph hanging over the table where they ate and read and studied. It was a picture of a locomotive and of a man about to step into the cab.

Ned was sure that his father's overalls had smudges of black on them and that the brass parts of that engine were very shiny; but photographs have their limitations. This one did not fail to show, however, that the man had seeing eyes and that his square, strong chin was very like the chin of the boy sitting at the table.

"The train would have gone quite to smash if father hadn't stuck to his engine, wouldn't it, Mother?"

"Yes, so everybody said at the time," replied the mother, realizing that even now, as in many a coming hard experience in her boy's life, the

story of his hero-father would nerve him to think and act "as befits a man."

After a pause Ned commented, "Well, Mother, I don't think seventy dollars' worth of gratitude was very much gratitude when people had their lives saved."

The widow recalled how small the "purse" had been in standing between her and the financial troubles of that time five years ago. Ned was quick to notice that it was his mother who was now the sober and silent one.

"Mother, I'll soon be a man and then you shall not work so hard. And I'm going to be a member of the legislature and have a law passed that women like you shall have some money from the State; anyhow, a law that no old restaurant shall make women work ten hours a day."

The mother smiled and had a notion in her mind that her boy really would some day get just such a law passed. "But, Ned, if you are determined to be an engineer, how will you ever have time to go to the legislature? Engineers are kept busy, you know."

This was indeed a difficulty. Ned had begun

to notice that only men who sit in offices and do not use their hands are elected to important positions; and he was now trying to discover some kind of engineer who would have time to go to the legislature.

"I am quite sure, Mother, that if men like Uncle Philip could make the laws, things would be better; but I s'pose nobody would vote for a plumber, and maybe not even for an engineer. That is queer, isn't it? Well, Comrade Mother, a parade tonight. Fall in!"

Whenever the day was especially hard, if mother was very tired, or the extra papers did not sell, or anything went wrong at school; also, when the day brought something particularly pleasant, Ned declared for a parade. Hence, there were goings on—at least, goings back and forth—nearly every evening in the rooms over the millinery store. Somehow, Mrs. Adams did not feel quite so discouraged after these demonstrations, and Ned declared he could do his arithmetic better on account of them. It was Mrs. Adams' part to carry a yellow, wedge-shaped banner with the words, *Votes for Women,* on it;

while Ned carried a red flag that his Cousin Ruth had given him on his last birthday. The band music usually consisted of the *Marseillaise* whistled by Ned, and the line of march was from the north end of the kitchen to the south end of the living-room, and this could be made as long as they pleased by going back and forth. On this particular night, instead of whistling, Ned began to sing, "The people's flag is deepest red," only pausing long enough to urge the part of the procession that followed him to come in strong on the chorus.

Later in the evening Ned returned to the subject of cowards with the final opinion, "Well, if a fellow can't stand being called a coward he is a coward. Guess I can stand it, and I won't be any boy scout, either." After he had gone into his little room his mother sat a long while in the old armchair, forgetful of her own bed in the corner, anxious about the future and then lost in memories of the past. Her boy was growing taller and stronger every day, and thus far she had been able to keep him in school and to pay all her bills. Would her health and

strength hold out for another five years? Unceasing toil smites the body, but worry strikes at the mind. He is crippled indeed for his journey who must feel the blows of both. But not yet would this gallant-hearted woman walk with a limp or cry to any hand to help her along the road.

CHAPTER II.

Five years before, when Ned was seven, the Adamses were happy in a tiny new cottage on a back street of Hillsburg. It, with the bit of a yard in front and the garden in the rear, was theirs; that is, almost theirs. In another year the mortgage would be quite paid off. "The home first and then the life insurance," Edward Adams and his wife had agreed. Perhaps they were unwise. It is easy to see afterwards where oneself or one's neighbor has been unwise. Nor would Adams belong to the organization of Railway Trainmen. "Not until the organization takes measures to compel the railroad companies themselves to pay for the blood they spill, will I join. Better spend the dues and taxes in a movement that declares outspokenly that the railroads belong by rights to the common people. When trains are run for use and not for profit a trainman's life will be held to be worthy of care, because he is a man, and not a mere fixture of an

engine." In this view Adams never wavered, and he found his friends among those who looked at the matter as he did.

And then came a day when the city morning papers reported: "Accident on the Tri-Valley road. Engineer killed. Fireman jumps for life. No passengers seriously injured." Small type details closed with the brief note: "The engineer lived at Hillsburg, and leaves a wife and child." Men on the trains that day read the papers and commented: "Well, that was luck; only the engineer killed."

"How was he hurt?" asked a neighbor of the freight brakeman who helped to recover the body and bring it home.

"He was hurt all over, Ma'am. Just plumb wrecked, like his engine," and the man pulled the rim of his cap low over his eyes and hurried along.

In the front room of his little home, "only an engineer" lay at rest and the house was hushed as it had never been before since it was built. Giving a glow to the whole room was a flag that some friends from another town larger than

Hillsburg had brought in and draped above the broken body. The flag was one that plainly had gone through storm and sunshine and wet, dust and rain, but nothing had seriously marred the enduring beauty of its silken folds, or changed its one color, a deep, pure red.

At nightfall two men of evident importance arrived and asked to see Mrs. Adams; they were the president of the First National Bank of Hillsburg and the minister of the largest church in town. After some introductory remarks, the minister said, "We feel, Mrs. Adams, that our town has been—ah—honored, and we have come to ask that you will consent to public services in the Brick church."

"Of course," added the bank president, "that would be removed," indicating the flag. "Of course," hastily chimed in the pastor of the Brick church, and the banker continued, "if the funeral occurs on the afternoon of the Sabbath day—as I understand it does—the factory hands, being unfortunately free, may become excited if they see anything unusual, such as a flag like that. The foreign element is, as you know, easily ex-

cited, and we should not wish the decorum of the day to be in any way invaded."

"Yes, you will join us in desiring to preserve our Sabbath," echoed the minister as his most influential parishioner so perfectly stated the case. Mrs. Adams could not speak; she motioned to her brother to answer them. In a low and almost stern voice, Fleming said, "We thank you, gentlemen, for your good intentions; but the flag was placed there by Mr. Adams' comrades, and it will remain there until the last moment. If its removal is the condition of going into the church, then we will bury our dead by ourselves."

"Oh, well; let it be as you wish. We regret that we cannot make the arrangements we had in mind;" and the eminent citizens bowed themselves out. One of them must have told about their errand to the Adams' home, and the outcome of it; for the next morning word was going around that the coffin was not fine enough to be taken into the Brick church; others said it was wrapped in a strange flag that nobody knew anything about. "And Mr. Adams such a pleasant-spoken man, too," said one woman to another.

"Yes, and him born and brought up here in Hillsburg. What have they got a foreign flag for?"

The funeral was a very public one after all, and that back street held many more people than could possibly have crowded into the Brick Church. Some came out of curiosity, many others because they were sorry for Mrs. Adams—and "Adams was a brave fellow." One group of men appeared who had never been seen in Hillsburg before. Four of them, it was, who lifted the coffin high on their shoulders and bore it through the silent throng of workingmen and workingwomen. They did not seem to object to the "foreign" flag; indeed, they wore on their coat lapels buttons that matched the flag in color. "Comrades all," thought one who was himself a stranger in Hillsburg, and as the brilliant mass of red moved on, glowing above the dark-garbed throng, the stranger murmured in an undertone,

"The banner bright, the symbol plain
Of human right, of human gain."

Finally, in an out of the way corner of the cemetery, at the last moment, as Fleming had said it should be, the flag was reverently taken up

and folded, and a great handful of scarlet carnations put in its place.

The people went away, and Edward Adams was left to rest among the hills of his boyhood. He had made his last "run"; nothing would worry him any more: not the hard night-trips; not his lack of education, or the mortgage on his home; not even concern for the welfare of wife and child. The roar of distant trains dropped to a faint echo on that quiet hillside. He would have wished no other requiem.

Of those who returned to town, two were now to know what it meant "to have the back-door gone," as an old Irish saying expresses the loss of the provider. There was money in the bank ready for the next mortgage payment; but funeral expenses took most of what remained, and even the "purse" of those passengers was melting away in spite of much economy. When another payment became due, Mrs. Adams, in her perplexity, went to the officials of the bank that held the mortgage and stated the case to them. If they would give her time she thought

she could find work and eventually pay all that was owing.

"We are sorry, Madam, but business is business, you know." It was; for no sooner had the widow turned over her little home to the bank than it was sold to another struggling family and another mortgage placed upon it.

"Better see if the railroad will not do something for you," the bank suggested. Accordingly, Mrs. Adams consulted a lawyer who promised to look into the matter. After a while he reported, advising her "not to fight the railroads; she had no case; the accident could not be shown to be anybody's fault"—and the lawyer took a considerable part of her small bread-and-butter fund.

"Come with us, Margaret," said Philip Fleming and his wife; but knowing that both ends hardly met, as it was, in her brother's home, Margaret Adams answered, "No, we must try it alone." So she and Ned went to live in the three rooms over the millinery store and she herself found employment in the restaurant on Main street,—her reputation as a master hand at cooking being quite enough of a recommendation.

It was hard to leave the little garden where the grapevines and quince trees were growing, hard to have no ground to plant tomatoes and sweet peas in, but hardest of all to be obliged to take her boy where, it seemed, he must either be on the streets or stay cooped up indoors; yet by making the most of Sundays and holidays and a week or two off each summer she had managed, as the years went by, to secure to the growing lad a portion of his rightful heritage of country life. Her brother helped, for it was Uncle Philip who taught Ned to swim and skate, to climb hills and explore swamps. As a result, there was probably not another boy in Hillsburg who had so little of the gang-life of the streets; and even if there had not existed great and grave objections to the boy scout plan, that plan would have held little interest for this child of the hills who had resources that afforded more fun than squad drill in a khaki uniform promised to yield.

CHAPTER III.

Several days had passed since Jim Pierson had openly boasted that he intended to thrash Ned Adams. The shivery delight felt by all the eighth-grade boys, in view of the coming battle, was beginning to wear away. Jim was very busy with his company of scouts. The snows of the late winter had melted from the broad street in front of the schoolhouse, and as the baseball season had not yet set in, the scouts, proud of their brass buttons and khaki-colored canvas leggings, were devoting themselves to their military exercises. The little boys of the lower grades were left to find amusement in such coasting as the bank down to the pond yet afforded. The schoolyard pond, which dried up in summer and seemed to exist in winter to give the grammar school children a handy skating place, was still covered with rough old ice in which, here and there, were large open holes where floated chunks of ice that had been broken off by the boys.

It was the afternoon recess time of one of these days when a little sled with a little fellow lying flat on his face shot down the bank onto the ice. Who gave the sled such a push? Why had not the child seen the open hole? No time to ask now; too late to ask, anyhow.

"It's Danny! Danny Brownley!" cried the children as boy, sled and lumps of ice were mixed up together for a short minute or two. Then nobody could see even the blue tassel on Danny's cap; only the little sled floated there where the child had struggled. At the first outcry the scouts had broken ranks and swarmed with the others to the edge of the ice, but they ventured no further. The lad in the water had barely disappeared when a boy who had seen from a distance all that had happened came leaping down the bank. Pushing his way through the crowd he went swiftly to the edge of the yet solid ice and let himself down as if it were the top of a stone wall. The water came quite up to Ned Adams' shoulders, and he walked with difficulty through it. He was feeling with his feet; then he stooped down until his head also went

under water. When he straightened up he surely had a burden in his arms. Even then, not a pair of canvas leggings moved onto the ice; it was a mere level-headed girl that went to Ned's help; indeed, she was at the edge of the hole almost as soon as Ned was. Lying down where Ned had climbed in, the girl caught hold of the unconscious Danny when Ned lifted him up, and dragged him out onto the ice; then she gave a hand to Ned himself and together they carried Danny to the shore.

"Get the double-runner, quick!" Ned commanded. The boys ran and brought the big sled and crowded around to see what he would do next.

"Stand back, every one of you!" he further ordered, "and go, quick, somebody and tell Miss Ford and telephone for Dr. Brownley; and you, Jim, run for blankets. Now, Ruth, we must put him across the sled, face down, to let the water run out."

"Yes, and we must get his tongue out of his mouth or he will drown yet. You know father always told us that," said Ruth, who had been

holding the little boy across her knees with his face down until the sled was at hand. Ruth and Ned, losing not a minute in considering what to do, worked while they talked and gave orders, and before any physician could reach the place Danny, under their treatment, opened his eyes, choking and crying. In a very short while Dr. Brownley's automobile whirled into the school grounds and the doctor himself took Danny up and carried him up the bank.

"Wherever that ottermobil goes somebody is sick," said one girl with a wise shake of her head as the children streamed after the doctor to see Danny taken off in the red-cross machine. They could readily believe that their playmate, so well a while ago, was now very sick.

Ned himself, soaked and chilled, and realizing that there was nothing more to be done, dropped to the ground in spite of Ruth's efforts to keep him on his feet. But their teacher had come. She and Ruth lifted Ned to the doubly useful double-runner and gently wrapped him in one of the forgotten blankets; and so he was taken to his home. There were boys enough who were

glad to draw that sled and it was a genuine guard of honor that halted in front of the millinery shop.

That evening Ned and his mother had some callers: Dr. and Mrs. Brownley came, the eighth grade teacher dropped in again, and, of course, Ruth and her father and mother were there. At last, when everybody had gone, Ned exclaimed, "I say, Mother, there aren't any cowards in our family yet, are there? Anyhow, Ruth is true blue. I hope the fellows will remember for a while what she did today. A parade, Mother! and you will have to be the whole show and carry both flags."

As Mrs. Adams took down the yellow flag and the red one the band, wrapped in an old shawl and curled up in the big armchair, faintly whistled the opening notes of the *Marseillaise*.

Ned could not go to school the next day and thus the boys had an opportunity to speak their minds unembarrassed by the presence of one whom they had called a coward.

"Gee whiz! I'll bet Ned Adams could fight if

he should take a notion to," said one boy, excitedly.

"But he won't need to take a notion to," retorted another; and emboldened by the recent turn in affairs he whirled around and confronted the bossling of the Grammar School. "Jim Pierson, if you so much as touch Ned Adams, us fellows will pitch into you all together. You'll get the lickin' of your life. You'll see your finish, and it will be the end of your being our captain."

This speech doubtless gained some of its defiant quality from the fact that the speaker and the boy to whom it was addressed were just then free from every stitch of khaki. Jim lacked the protection of his official uniform and the other felt none of the submissive obedience of a good common soldier.

It was mortifying to the boy scouts not to be able to strut up and down Main street claiming Ned Adams as "one of our best men, you know"; and doubly mortifying to reflect that he despised the boy scout business. And they not only could not have Ned, they must have Jim—and Jim was captain.

"Pierson is the tallest fellow in the eighth grade, and he wouldn't go onto the ice," complained a belegginged boy who was himself one of those who had failed to stir from land. The boys found no relief from the irritating sense of shame until they had agreed among themselves what they would do if any scout "offered to touch Adams," and they were quite ready to back up the one of their number who defied the captain.

As for Jim himself, whether he really was afraid of "seeing his finish" at the hands of his mates, or whether some better feeling made him wish to be friendly with Ned, it is certain that from that time neither he nor the second officer urged scout duty upon the boy who had said, "No, I thank you."

CHAPTER IV.

The spring vacation was at hand and there were to be exercises—recitations and singing—in the room of the eighth grade on the last afternoon. Ruth Fleming had an idea; she was always having ideas, but this was quite a special one which she had not yet mentioned to anybody.

Miss Ford, I want to give a surprise to our room. Mayn't I, please? and please mayn't I do it without telling you beforehand, so as to surprise you, too?"

"Why, Ruth, this is an unusual request," said the teacher, already somewhat surprised.

"Yes, I know; but I should so like to do it."

"Will it take much time, Dear?"

"No, just a few minutes."

"And won't it make any disorder among the scholars?"

"No, it can't."

Miss Ford thought she could trust Ruth, who, in spite of her high spirits, was a girl of good

judgment; so she gave her consent, though with some reluctance.

From that day on, a number of boys and girls went about with an air of mystery, but with close-shut lips. They had promised Ruth they would not tell and they did not. Several evenings were spent at Ruth's home and twice the little company went to call on the High School chemistry assistant, who boarded at a house where there was a piano.

The final Friday afternoon came. All the eighth graders were present in their room, wearing festival clothes and manners. The teachers of the lower grades dropped in, since the little scholars had finished their exercises in the forenoon. Several of the High School teachers—among them the chemistry assistant—had come over from the High School; and, lastly, various guests appeared, among them Mrs. Brownley, escorted by Danny, though he soon deserted her and went around and crowded in beside his beloved Ned Adams. Danny well knew that as a guest he could take liberties.

The program was about half completed. Jim

Pierson had recited as much as he could remember of the *Charge of the Light Brigade,* roaring out,

> "Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and die,"

as if it were a matter of great merit "not to reason why." Then Miss Ford said, "Now, children and friends, we are to have a number not on the program. I am sure we shall all enjoy it." She sat down, as expectant as anybody and, it must be added, with some misgivings.

With this introduction the chemistry assistant slipped to the piano—she had selected a seat near it—and began playing a prelude to the famous music of *Maryland, My Maryland.* At the same time Ruth and Ned rose and went onto the platform, bowed to their audience and stood there side by side. With the first note of the accompaniment they began to sing and the words were:

> The people's flag is deepest red,
> It shrouded oft our martyred dead;
> And ere their limbs grew stiff and cold,
> Their heart's blood dyed its ev'ry fold.

Now it happened that both Ruth and Ned could sing quite well, and their clear young voices rang out in a way to stir any company of people; but even so they were to have re-enforcements. "The people's flag" was the cue for two boys in the back part of the room who instantly rose and marched up the aisle and took places one by the side of Ruth and the other by Ned, so that when the chorus was reached there were four to sing,

> Then raise the scarlet standard high!
> Within its shade we'll live and die;
> Tho' cowards flinch and traitors sneer,
> We'll keep the red flag flying here.

As they sang this chorus they swung their right arms over their heads precisely as if they were waving flags on high. Ruth and Ned began a second stanza:

> Look round! The Frenchman loves its blaze;
> The sturdy German chants its praise;
> In Moscow's vaults its hymns are sung;
> Chicago swells the surging throng.

With the words, "look round," a girl and another boy went up and ranged themselves in line with those already there, so that the chorus now had six voices. They were ready for a third stanza and the leaders sang,

It waved above our infant might
When all ahead seemed dark as night;
It witnessed many a deed and vow—
We must not change its color now.

This time two more girls and a boy made their way to the platform. The chorus was growing stronger and the audience was becoming excited.

It well recalls the triumphs past;
It gives the hope of peace at last;
The banner bright, the symbol plain
Of human right and human gain.

With this stanza a little girl who had always been too shy to speak a piece slipped quickly up to one end of the line; a boy new in the school took his place at the other, and last of all, Danny Brownley went proudly striding onto the plat-

form. Very softly Ruth and Ned sang the last stanza:

> With heads uncovered swear we all
> To bear it onward till we fall;
> Come dungeon dark or gallows grim,
> This song shall be our parting hymn.

Twelve boys and girls made a line quite across the platform and they sang the chorus with a will. To be sure, Danny could not sing much, but he made up for it by raising both arms and waving two imaginary flags over his head. His only discontent at the rehearsals had been that he was not allowed to stand next to Ned; but Ruth explained to him that not being very tall he would look better at the end.

The whole thing had been so well done,—not a boy of the seven had grinned or shuffled, not one of the five girls had giggled or forgotten the lines—that the school, teachers and guests, broke out in applause; they kept on applauding, even Miss Ford did—proud, probably because scholars of hers could so cleverly plan and perform an exercise. Ruth was ready for them. "I tell you

what, Ned," she had said beforehand, "if it goes off all right,—and it must,—and they encore us, we'll repeat the verse that has 'Moscow's vaults' in it; we'll train so that we can all sing that." They had trained accordingly; so now they all gave the second stanza and the chorus once more; then they took hold of hands, bowed to the audience and went quietly to their seats.

Excepting certain mothers nobody noticed that the boys who sang the *Red Flag* were boys who had never worn leggings or carried wooden guns. They were not boy scouts and they no longer cared that they were not; they said they had rather train with Ned Adams and go places with him than to be ordered around by Jim Pierson. The mothers of these boys—so far as they were present—wished the fathers had been there; but the fathers were bricklayers and carpenters and factory hands and could never come to school exercises.

"What did you think of my surprise?" asked Miss Ford after everybody else had gone home and the teachers were alone in their cloak-room.

"Great, wasn't it!" exclaimed the chemistry

assistant, secretly pleased to think she had been the one selected by Ruth to play that accompaniment.

"And hasn't Ruth Fleming the dramatic instinct, though!" remarked the primary teacher. "Anyone of us would have got all twelve of those children up there to begin with. She certainly has an eye to effects. But what do you suppose her idea was in having them go onto the patform, two or three at a time?"

"Not an inch of flag about them, yet you could fairly see red banners over their heads as they sang," added the drawing teacher. "Yes, Ruth will be invaluable for class theatricals if she can go to college."

"Oh, she will never stop with the high school; but she isn't going to any woman's college, thank you! Her ambition will be satisfied by nothing less than a university," returned Miss Ford, who was not unacquainted with certain brave plans of her two scholars who had led the others that afternoon.

"And I suppose the little radical will go soapboxing it around the campus with an admiring

company of students to hand out literature for her," said the seventh grade teacher who was herself a university woman.

"If she does, her Cousin Ned will be her first lieutenant; for they are two comrades. Ruth is a year older than Ned and might just as well have gone into the High School at the end of the first half this year, but she 'hangs back,' as she expresses it, 'to keep up with Ned.' I am quite sure she failed in geography on purpose to prevent her promotion. Ned is ahead of his own class, so they will both enter the High School with advance standing. They have certainly managed matters to suit themselves," concluded Miss Ford in a tone that revealed both pride and perplexity.

"How well Ruth looks with her hair cut short that way," commented the drawing teacher; "is it her mother's notion?"

"No; she was found one day when she was four years old, sitting on the floor considering a mixture of curls and scissors. As the curls had all come from one side of her head those on the other side had to be cut off to match. The curl-clipping process has been kept up ever since, her

mother says, because Ruth refuses to be bothered with long hair."

"I hear the child has a pocket," said the primary teacher as she drew her handkerchief out of her sleeve.

"Not merely one, but two—one on each side—"to balance," she explained to me one day. And, indeed, she needs to balance them, for it seems to me Ruth wears pockets for the whole girls' side of the room. You should see the strings and pins and apples and knives that she cares for in those pockets."

"What is she going to do after she has graduated from the university?" inquired another teacher.

"Oh, she modifies her plans for a career about every three months. Just at present she is to be an architect and show men how to build houses for women to work in. This, I believe, is due to the steepness of their stairs. She rages because the laddery stairs make her mother so tired."

"It must be her father who is responsible for her being so different from other girls; they say he teaches her everything that he does Ned—

swimming and machinery," remarked a teacher who had not spoken before—one to whom "machinery" signified equal parts of grease and mystery.

"Yes, Mr. Fleming has unusual notions about bringing up children, girls as well as boys. And I confess myself convinced that it would be better if there were more like him. Anyhow," said Miss Ford in conclusion, "Ruth is a dear girl and I am immensely proud of her."

"In spite of her geography?" asked the chemistry assistant with a mischievous smile.

CHAPTER V.

The nature of the surprise in the West End eighth grade exercises that Friday did not leak out, it just overflowed, and by the time Hillsburg had eaten its supper all West-enders were commenting on the extra number. "Who could have put Ruth Fleming up to it?" was asked until people realized that Ruth was quite capable of putting herself up to it. Her father and mother and the other members of their Club were as much surprised as anybody; for, although they had known about the evening singings, they did not know that there had been an object in these rehearsals.

Within thirty-six hours a meeting of the School Board was called. The members gathered in the superintendent's office, and after a brief debate a communication was ordered, which the secretary was to prepare and forward to Miss Ford as promptly as possible.

The Board was surprised and disturbed to

learn of the peculiar occurrence in the room of the West End eighth grade on the day previous. The Board could not understand how any feature came to be added to the program by any scholar or scholars without the teacher's knowledge and consent. In particular, the character of the performance of some of her scholars was especially regretted by the Board. Miss Ford ought to know that no public school-room could be used for the expression of such sentiments as the song was said to contain; and they believed they could count on her co-operation in safeguarding from such unpatriotic and dangerous doctrines the children entrusted to her charge. It would be a matter of deep regret to all members of the Board if they were to lose the services of a teacher who was, in general, so valuable; and they presumed they need do no more than suggest that such remissness in supervision on the part of any teacher would necessarily result in forfeiture of position. Trusting she would recognize the propriety of their action in the matter, they were very sincerely hers.

The composition of this note was a heavy Sun-

day task for the secretary; but he wrestled with it, determined to do his whole duty and convey to this teacher an adequate and accurate idea of the anxiety and stern displeasure she had occasioned the Board. Just possibly, if they had waited a few days and even let the matter go without official interference, the ends they sought would have stood a better chance of attainment; yet one never can tell.

The note was brought to Miss Ford on Monday afternoon as she sat at her desk in the deserted school-room working over those papers and reports that follow every public school teacher into her leisure hours. She read the secretary's communication twice to get its full meaning; and then, disregarding reports, she fell a-thinking. What was her real offense? Clearly, not the mere fact of an irregularity in the program; it was the nature of the extra feature. The School Board must needs rebuke her because she had given permission for a performance that proved to be a song expressing sentiments that, in the judgment of some persons, should be forbidden. Could it be true that such words as the children

had sung were not to be heard in American schools? and she tried to remember just what the "unpatriotic and dangerous" verses were. To recall them and ponder them was now to enter a wide place where there were many matters to be reckoned with—matters which this teacher had known about, more or less definitely, but which had received from her only such attention as might be given by one whom they did not concern. Facts of history and social life were seen in new connections and new meanings. Slowly there rose before her a vision "of human right, of human gain"—the vision that comes in due time to some persons and to others never at all.

On Miss Ford's desk was a little book that had fallen into her hands, as gift books do; she had known it as a prose-poem and as nothing more. Now she took it up and turned the pages until she found a special one, and read:

"Nevertheless I say to you, remember the Fellowship, in the hope of which ye have this day conquered; and when ye come to London be wise and wary; and that is as much as to say, be bold and hardy; for in these days are ye building a

house which shall not be overthrown, and the world shall not be too great or too little to hold it; for, indeed, it shall be the world itself, set free from evil-doers for friends to dwell in."

And on another page she read the words:

"It is for him that is lonely or in prison to dream of fellowship, but for him that is of a fellowship to do and not to dream."

The level rays of the setting sun were making the plants in the western windows throw strange shadows over the desks. The teacher slowly and absent-mindedly laid away her papers, put on her wraps and left the building. She had resolved, with more wisdom and boldness than she realized, to find the Fellowship to which some of her scholars seemed already to belong.

School Boards cannot always keep secrets as well as children can. The secretary of the Hillsburg Board told his wife what they had done, and his wife told a few members of the Ladies' Union on Tuesday, so that by Wednesday night even the children knew that Miss Ford had been disciplined and was likely to get turned off; someone surmised that she might go, anyhow, and

this was repeated as a fact: "Miss Ford meant to resign because the Board had been unjust in their judgment of her." The excitement was great and the Board was overwhelmed with protests. The educational officials had now real cause for anxiety, for it was no part of their program to lose Miss Ford—she was much too popular and too valuable. They realized tardily that it is easier to stop a rumor before it starts than to catch it after it is going. The West End mind must somehow be calmed and the Board saw no other course open to it except to meet again and reappoint the eighth grade teacher at once for another year—and here it was, only March.

One evening at the height of the commotion, Ruth Fleming flung herself into Mrs. Adams' rooms.

"Aunt Margaret! Did we do anything so awful? I feel like—like Meg Merrilies," and with flashing eyes she went on:

"Ride your ways, Laird of Ellengowan—ride your ways, Godfrey Bertram! This day have ye quenched seven smoking hearths—see if the fire in your ain parlour burn the blither for that. Ye

have riven the thack off seven cottar houses—look if your ain roof-tree stand the faster. Ye may stable your stirks in the shealings of Dern-cleugh—see that the hare does not couch on the hearthstone at Ellengowan."

"Go on, Ruth!" urged Ned as his cousin paused for breath. "That isn't all of Meg's speech." But Mrs. Adams, while she tried to smooth out her own smile of admiration, said with a touch of concern in her voice: "There, Ruth, dear; don't waste your energy. And if you ever go reciting such things as that among unfriendly hearers it will be believed that we are a violent people and that our red flag does mean something to be feared."

"But, of course, it doesn't, and intelligent persons ought to know that it doesn't."

Ruth was too young to perceive how wide a difference exists between what people ought to know and what they actually do know in a typical community such as Hillsburg was.

"Anyhow, what right have they to blame Miss Ford for what we did?" Even then a new idea occurred to the indignant girl: the School Board

should have another shock, and it would not be her teacher's fault this time. The sudden inspiration had instantly a quieting effect and Mrs. Adams enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing the two children sit happily down to discuss a history lesson assigned for the first day after vacation. But elementary history lessons are not exacting; this one, at least, did not interfere with the prompt and steady development, all in her own thoughts, of this fresh scheme of Ruth's.

CHAPTER VI.

For many weeks the High School boy scouts had drilled and done target practice, until at length the town seemed really quite safe from an enemy. It only remained to plant a battery on Lookoff, and perhaps one on each of several other hilltops, and every citizen might sleep with a sense of being protected.

"What a shame, though, to get so good and ready and then not have any war," complained Bert Loken, the captain. "I wish those greasy Mexicans would give us half an excuse to go down there and wipe them off the face of the earth," and Bert saw himself wading the Rio Grande at low water, beckoning with his sword to his troops to come on. His imaginings of glory always wound up with Main street of Hillsburg renamed Loken avenue by his grateful and admiring townsmen.

Memorial Day was approaching and preparations were being made to observe it with especial

style and pomp. The "veterans of two wars" were to march with the boy scouts for guard of honor. The West-enders and East-enders laying aside their rivalry, agreed to combine forces for the sake of an imposing column, while a mixed company of girls and little boys were to bring up the rear with flags and flowers. It was the custom in Hillsburg for the school children to march to the public square, hear some short speeches, sing *My Country, 'Tis of Thee,* and then go to the cemetery and decorate the graves of soldiers. This year the parade of the boy scouts was to be the great feature of the day. The grade-school heart swelled with pride at the thought of marching behind real guns, and many townspeople, who were grown up in body if not in mind, regarded the new martial element as both fortunate and fitting.

One day, just before the thirtieth, Ruth Fleming gathered a few of her followers in a sheltered angle of the schoolhouse and explained a plan to them. "The Stars and Stripes seem to belong to people who go to war and kill other people. I think we ought to decorate the graves of persons

who have saved lives; they should have the people's flag and that, you know, is red."

"Oh, yes! We remember 'raise the scarlet standard high,'" answered several of the little group.

"Now, girls, of anybody of this town, who has saved lives?"

"Oh, your Uncle Edward."

"Yes, so he shall have a flag. Mother and Aunt Margaret and I keep scarlet geraniums growing over there in the summer time, and now there will be a flag before the geraniums blossom. And who else is there, besides my Uncle Edward?"

"Oh, the trained nurse!" replied one girl quickly. "Don't you remember last summer those people on our street that had bad milk, and they all got the typhoid fever, and that nurse she nursed them and they all got well; but she took the fever, too, and she was so worn out caring for the others, she just died. I heard Dr. Brownley tell mother about it and he said that nurse was a hero."

"Yes, we all vote for her to have a flag, don't

we? That makes two flags. Can anybody think of anybody else?"

"Oh, Mike who drove the market wagon! We'd never forget him. He killed that mad dog with the chopping knife, but the dog bit him first. You know how a lot of us ran up to see what the fuss was about, and Mike told us to go away, get into a house, quick. I heard folks say that day that if Mike hadn't settled the dog some of us would surely have been bitten."

They did, indeed, remember Michael Donovan, who kept on driving the wagon for a little while; then a new man took his place and nobody ever saw Michael again. The children knew where he was buried—off on that side where the cemetery people didn't take the trouble to cut the goldenrods and wild asters. They all agreed that the market boy should have a flag. "We'll just make folks notice Mike's grave," declared Ruth. "They think it's no matter about that part of the cemetery because there aren't any fine monuments over there—hardly any white stones at all—and they don't know that goldenrods and asters are the beautifulest things yet."

"I think there should be a flag for Granny Truman, 'cause she went upstairs and got the Loken baby out when their house was on fire," said another girl. "Imagine it! Forgot their own baby! You know that old black shawl granny used to wear. She wrapped the baby all up in the shawl, but her calico dress burned just like anything, and that was why she didn't live much longer; and the baby never got one scorch." It was perfectly certain that granny deserved a flag.

Though the girls tried hard to think of someone else who clearly had died to save lives, their list did not go beyond four.

"Then," announced Ruth, "we'll have four flags. I'll ask mother to get us some kind of red cloth, and you come to my house Saturday and we will hem them. But it's a secret; none of us must tell." Accordingly they all promised, "ponourword and sacredhonor," not to tell.

"Seems to me your Uncle Edward ought to have a bigger flag than the others, because he saved a whole trainful of people," remarked one little girl.

"No," replied their leader; "father says that

if each one does all he has a chance to do, each one deserves the same praise. The Lokens didn't have twin babies, did they? So Granny Truman couldn't save more than one, could she?"

This seemed sound reasoning.

"And there weren't two mad dogs for Mike to kill, were there?"

The mere suggestion of two such dogs happening at the same time made some of the girls look timorously down the road. No, Michael had done all there was to do that day.

Cloth was bought and cut into four pieces of equal size and these were hemmed by the girls. Queer stitches might have been found, but that did not matter; each little sewing woman was doing her best and sewing gratitude and reverence into the cloth. Ruth got some smooth, slender sticks and tacked the finished pieces of cloth on. "We won't use paste," she said, "because the wind and rain spoil a pasted flag in no time."

Finally, the girls decided on three of their number who were to join Ruth in the possibly hazardous adventure of carrying the flags. If Ruth was leading them into mischief these militant spirits

were certainly very willing to be led. They spent some time debating whether their proposed act might not be held to be worse than the singing, last term. On two points, however, they felt entirely clear: first, their teacher could not be blamed; second, the School Board could not "get after" them when they were plumb in the middle of the street. Ruth knew something about a document called the "Bill of Rights," and she believed it covered the case of carrying the people's flag on the people's highway.

Ruth's mother was necessarily made a sharer in their plan and if she offered no protest it was because it seemed to her only right and just to honor with humanity's noblest symbol the graves of those who had laid down their lives to save other lives.

Memorial Day proved to be chilly and windy, but one girl hardly needed a wrap as she sped along to the schoolhouse. Excitement kept her warm, for under her long gray coat were four flags. Ruth managed to get the other three girls next to her and just as the procession was ready to start, out came the red banners and four girls

held them up among the other flags that were flapping in the wind.

"What has that child done now?" thought the West End eighth grade teacher as she looked the ranks over. "Ruth," she asked in a low tone, "what does this mean?"

"Dear Miss Ford, they are for the persons that everyone else has forgotten. No soldiers, you know, but those who died to save others: Michael Donovan and Granny Truman and—and two more."

Miss Ford could have hugged the eager girl, then and there; but everybody was looking, the band was playing and the eighth grade must start instantly. Over and above all that, the teacher herself had lately joined a great procession and begun a long march—and there were not enough school boards in the State to make her ask those girls to yield up their banners. So the red flags went to the square and to the cemetery and finally to four out-of-the-way graves. The children were happy over what they had done.

"Wonder what Mike would have said if he had known we would ever be decorating his grave on Memorial Day," remarked one of them.

"Yes, and Granny Truman, too. She thought she wasn't anybody because she was so poor. You know the Lokens let her come and pare potatoes and things, so she earned something to eat, and she wore that black shawl winter and summer."

"And I do hope our flags keep until the goldenrod comes," said a third; "they show from the road, but surely nobody would take them; for nobody cares for the red flag except our folks in the Club."

CHAPTER VII.

It happened that not long after Memorial Day the Hillsburg Club held its annual meeting. This Club must not for a moment be confused with the one to which the little girl had referred. The Hillsburg Club was composed exclusively of leading citizens who really thought that the town was their town. Wage-earners could not well be dispensed with, for they were human attachments of various forms of machinery sheltered by the big buildings; the women served as filling for the many crevices of social and domestic life, and the children promised the continuance and growth of the little city,—the children were potentially the laborers, the feminine element, and the leading citizens of the future. But in the judgment of this Club the really important part of the community of today was indicated by the membership lists of the Club's current records. Thus their attitude of mind was substantially that of the "braves" of some savage tribe, and the notion

of a slow but irresistible change in the social organism and the modes of community life was as foreign to their thoughts as any idea of tribal change was to their prototype in the wigwam.

On this particular evening the Club had eaten a superior supper and was now smoking its best brand of cigars—also superior. Conversation turned to Memorial Day. The chairman of that day, who was, of course, a prominent citizen and a member of the Club, was complimented on the very able manner in which he had presided; the ministers' remarks—two of them had made remarks—were flatteringly alluded to, and then the boy scouts naturally came in for comment.

"It is desirable to have these boys of the lower classes well in hand and taught to obey without question. We may need them at almost any time," said Mr. Pierson, owner of Hillsburg's largest mill. "I told my men I hoped I should see their boys in the ranks. They are in; that is, many of them are. There seems to be some influence, especially on the east side, where most of my people live, that is operating against the boy scout movement."

"And yet, between the boy scout pledge and the chance to carry a gun, you can catch almost any boy—if nobody interferes," added Mr. Pierson's partner; "especially if the matter is clinched by means of a little summer outing which the boys imagine to be like soldiering. Teach them that soldiering is military picnicking and the rest is easy."

"But did you notice those four red flags carried by little girls on Memorial Day?" The speaker was a member of the School Board. "Whose idea was that, I'd like to know? This red flag business has got to stop in this town, and the movement it represents must be stamped out. Nip it in the bud, I say," and the important board member looked as if it were only necessary for him to go out and speak the word and it would be effectually nipped.

The president of the National Bank added: "Yes, it is best to end such nonsense at once. Why, I understand that these ignorant Socialist fellows actually have to agree to cut loose from other parties and vote their own ticket, whether or no."

"Then this is no longer a free country!" Mr. Pierson almost shouted. A smile went round. The mill owner had been a candidate for the legislature, and while his employes had perhaps not been actually bribed or threatened, it was well known that they had been given distinctly to understand how they were expected to vote. Mr. Pierson was too excited to notice the smile.

"Well, we can discipline our employes," said another manufacturer who was helping to "make" Hillsburg, "but what are we to do if these notions are actually getting into our schools?"

"Yes, I believe my little chap has been hurrahing for the red flag," remarked Dr. Brownley with one of his genial laughs. Then he continued more soberly, "But, of course, it is a childish notion which he will get over when he is older and goes to college. We can trust the colleges and universities to preserve American ideals." This had a proper and familiar sound; yet the good doctor could not have told off-hand just what he meant by "American ideals," nor did he know that at that hour influences were preparing even in his own *alma mater* that might in due

time prevent Danny from getting over his notions, might, indeed, furnish him with certain world ideals.

Dr. Brownley turned to a fellow-physician and the president of the Board of Trade, and the three of them were at once in a discussion of Hillsburg's water system; consequently, the doctor did not hear the very next remark that was made in the group he had left. If he had been listening the conversation would undoubtedly have taken a different turn—at least in so far as Ned Adams and his relatives were the subjects for comment.

"From what my Jim says, I conclude that Adams boy is the ring-leader in perverting the grammar school children," said the first mill man, beginning again.

"He isn't half as bad as his cousin, the plumber's girl; that spectacle on Memorial Day was wholly due to her," rejoined the secretary of the School Board. "I went to particular pains to find out."

"Oh, well; she is only a girl and will never

take any hand in politics. The boy, now, is liable to become a dangerous agitator."

"Don't be too sure about the girl's never taking a hand in politics." This came from the editor of the Hillsburg *Advocate*. As an editor he read exchanges and knew, rather better than the others did, what was going on throughout the country.

"Couldn't bribe the widow to leave town with her boy, could we?" asked another club member half in jest and wholly forgetful for the moment that he had been on that train, the saving of which made one Hillsburg woman a widow and cost a boy his father.

"Not unless you get her a sixty-hour job in some other town and her brother and his family go too."

"Oh, that plumber"—then turning to the head of the principal hardware store the speaker continued: "Isn't there reason to believe that your man Fleming is at the bottom of the Socialism in our midst? Couldn't you, for the sake of the town, manage to part with him?"

"I could, but it would hit my business hard. Fleming is a profitable investment."

"Probably he knows it, and that is what makes him bitter."

"Oh, Fleming isn't what you would call bitter or sullen. He does his work with the last degree of faithfulness and efficiency; though it is true that he goes about as if he had some large matter in his mind and didn't care a hoot for the things that ordinarily interest people. I can't imagine him looking at the sporting page of a paper. His confoundedly superior manner certainly is irritating."

"I caught him the other night speaking to a crowd of men down at the foot of River street by the bridge," remarked another member who had thus far said nothing.

"Ranting, I suppose. Those Socialists always do rant, don't they?"

"Why, no; he talked quietly. His language was very simple and yet if I hadn't known it was nobody but Fleming I should have taken him for an educated man—quite one of our own class, don't you know," and the smug complacency born of academic affiliations displayed itself in the speaker's tone.

"Well, in whatever way he said it, I suppose he was trying to make the other workingmen as discontented as himself—talking about dividing up and having everything in common; that's the chief doctrine of Socialism, isn't it?" This remark was offered by a young man who had inherited a large fortune, the possession of which qualified him to be a leading citizen and secured for him a welcome to the Club.

"No; I heard nothing about dividing up; he was saying something about 'class struggle' and 'class consciousness'—whatever that may mean. And the men crowded up and listened as if their lives depended on his words. I should have liked to hear more; but I did not want to be recognized by that mob, so I slipped away."

"No more street-speaking without permits, and no permits to Socialists," was the memorandum made by one town official whose mind was undisturbed by any knowledge of such a thing as a Bill of Rights.

"We have the upper hand of the labor unions—and mostly no unions at all—in this town," said Mr. Pierson, "but I cannot help feeling that it

may ultimately avail us little if these fellows of the working class get the idea of political action into their head."

"Oh, political action is well enough if we can direct the action."

"But in proportion as the Socialist party grows we cannot control the voting even of our own employes."

"Why worry about that party? Isn't it made up of dreamers and fanatics? And in any case we all know that every third party goes to pieces."

"So far, I admit, but maybe we have struck the exception now," said the editor of the *Advocate*. "Have you seen their platform, and do you know how peculiarly they are organized? The platform may sound like the work of fanatics. The abolishing of the capitalist system; the collective possession and control of land that might be used for the purpose of exploitation and speculation; the abolishing of all classes and class privileges; all such stuff as that is, of course, utterly impractical and visionary; but I confess their fashion of organization is hardly that of dreamers—and I am afraid of them."

"I agree with you, Mr. Editor, and every precaution must be taken through the schools, the churches and the press to prevent the spread of their ideas. Our School Board must see to it that no teacher of Socialist tendencies gets a position."

"But suppose a teacher already in our schools turns Socialist?"

"Then she must go."

"If she happens to be Miss Ford?"

"My dear sir, you are borrowing trouble in making that supposition. It is impossible to imagine anyone as exclusive and aristocratic as Miss Ford fraternizing with the members of the Socialist Club that is said to exist in Hillsburg."

"We may all have trouble to lend—at least those of us with children may—if my wife is correct in her belief that Miss Ford calls frequently on Mrs. Adams and even goes to the Fleming house."

"Speaking of Mrs. Adams, I am afraid she does not get paid much in that restaurant," remarked the cashier of the Savings Bank, who knew that Mrs. Adams never made any deposits,

although the restaurant proprietor made very ample ones.

"Well, women in the Widow Adams' position know how to economize. They don't need the money that a man does," commented another member, as he flicked the ashes from his expensive cigar.

"I never see Mrs. Adams at divine service," observed the Brick Church minister; "possibly she is oftener at your church, Brother Ames?"—this to the pastor of the next largest church in town. "How difficult it is to make even the mothers of this day appreciate their privileges and their duty." Perhaps this speech, delivered in a sonorous pulpit tone, was meant to be a hint to the fathers present, but none of them heeded it. The Club went into Committee of the Whole to discuss the management of "their" town, and before they adjourned various matters were settled which, of course, could not concern mere workingmen—to say nothing of women.

CHAPTER VIII.

If the Brick Church minister could have overheard a conference held the following Saturday night in the home over the millinery store he might have felt still more discouraged regarding some persons whom he would have liked to count as sheep of his flock.

"It's going to be a beautiful day, Mother, dear; I am sure it is. We'll carry our lunch and your heavy shawl and our new S. P. C. book, and I'll take you by my new trail that nobody, not even Ruth, knows about."

It is just possible that Mrs. Adams would rather have gone by the old beaten path to the top of Lookoff, but she was much too loyal a chum to refuse Ned the pleasure of seeing her tramp along after him by any new trail that he might make.

Sunday morning dawned fair and sweet; the little luncheon basket was packed and with light hearts these two people set out for a day in the

fields and woods. There was a flicker's hole in a big oak tree, and, as Ned said, it does take so much time to watch birds. Besides the flicker there were others to be looked for; some they expected to find in the woods or the low bit of meadow that the new trail crossed; others at the edge of a field where young oats were growing. Shy wild flowers might be seen if one searched thoroughly, and sassafras roots dared the boy to dig them up without any tool except a sharpened stick. In the afternoon they came along home, a bit tired, perhaps; but it was "the good kind of tired," they agreed, for they were really benefited in body and mind and ready again for a new week's work. This Sunday was like many others, since Sunday was the only day they could go off together, and the tall spire of the Brick Church in the house-crowded valley below did not even suggest that they were not appreciating their privileges and their duty.

On week-days, if Ned had a leisure half-hour he was apt to be down by the little river or up on the big hills. It was not surprising that the other boys said that "Adams was no good at

football or baseball." "Just when you want him he is likely to be a mile away." "Oh, go hunt on top of Lookoff if you are looking for Ned Adams." They admitted, though, that Ned could beat them in two matters: he could swim better than any other boy in the West End, and he could climb steep hillsides faster. For these purposes his arms and legs seemed to be tough ropes of muscle. That such a fellow would not play ball was naturally held to be a mean shame. In their efforts to make him do team-work the High School boys told him that "a fellow who didn't play ball couldn't anyhow get into college—and you really needed to begin in the third grade to practise." This was serious, especially for one who was already as far along as the eighth grade. Ned had supposed that if he learned his lessons and graduated from the High School he could then enter a university. Uncle Philip would not know about this, for he had never even gone through the high school, and his mother would not know, either; so he went to his teacher.

"Is it true, what the fellows say, that unless

you belong to some team you cannot get into college?"

The teacher looked in the earnest, anxious face of her most gifted boy and answered with a reassuring smile: "Don't worry, Ned. Don't let anybody make you think you must play ball. We will find a university where they will admit you."

Ned went away with a "thank you" of relief, but the teacher herself fell into the mood of sober questioning that the boy had dropped. "If it has come to this," thought she, "if the high school boys really regard athletics as all important, if a place on some team takes precedence of manliness and scholarship, it is surely time to establish a new kind of college in the land."

Certain books in the town library were drawn so often by Ned that finally the librarian declared to her assistants: "We might about as well give those books to Ned Adams. What does he find so persistently fascinating in Nansen's *Farthest North* and Hedin's *Through Asia?*" Of all explorers Fridtjof Nansen was Ned's chief hero. "I don't believe Dr. Nansen was tied to any team when he was a boy—and look at him now." In

this reflection he took comfort whenever the ball-playing question came up. "If Lookoff were only twice, three times as high," was his constant wish as he poured over Fitzgerald's *Highest Andes,* for Ned loved to get up where he could stretch his eyes—those far-seeing gray eyes by which some persons recognized him as Engineer Adams' boy. He had made a list of twenty special mountains, beginning with Aconcagua and ending with Vesuvius, and he was quite determined to try the sides of some of these mountains some day. They loomed so large, they beckoned so constantly in his day-dreams that in his sleeping hours he often went riding on a yak up "the roof of the world," or with his llama he gained some lofty Andean pass.

Besides explorers' books, this boy longed for two other things: a field-glass and a camera—the camera the most. The public library afforded books, but alas, there was no place where one could draw out microscopes and telescopes and batteries and cameras. Ned had heard his uncle say, often and often, that every town ought to have a little observatory with at least a three-

inch telescope in it, so that everybody could get views of the wonderful things in the sky that even a small telescope shows. And besides that, a town should have a public laboratory where people could go nights and see experiments so that they should understand how batteries are made, and how electric bells ring, and what a dynamo is, and how one gets an eight-candle-power light in his house, and what volt and ampere and watt mean. In this people's laboratory there should be a dark room to study light in, a room with screens and prisms, with another dark room to develop negatives in, and, of course, a supply of all kinds of cameras that persons who were careful could get to take pictures with. And there should be other delightful rooms where people could learn how water may be taken to pieces so that you have the things that go together to make water, and they should see how such things as soap and baking powder and paint are made. In still other rooms there should be specimens of leaves and barks of trees so that anybody could know all the kinds of trees growing in his neighborhood; yes, and lenses and

microscopes to see the tiny parts of a leaf or flower that the naked eye cannot see any more than it can see what all those great dark patches on the moon are really like. There should be a room full of minerals and rock specimens with labels on them, and maps and maps on big wall spaces so that a fellow could go and look at them whenever he wanted to. Indeed, the discussion of the People's Laboratory occupied many a happy evening that Ned spent talking with his Uncle Philip and his Cousin Ruth. When the children asked Mr. Fleming whether any ordinary town could afford all this, he said: "Yes, as soon as people realize how very important it is to have a place that shall belong to all, where all can both learn and learn how, they will see that they can afford it." Mr. Fleming told them that the public library was indispensable, but some day it would be recognized that the public laboratory was equally indispensable, and then people would wonder how any town ever got along without it. Mr. Fleming mentioned some ways in which the town, and groups of persons in the town, wasted money; and the State and

the Federal Government wasted money the worst of all. It became quite clear to Ruth and Ned that with better management the town could be more of a place of opportunity for all the citizens —men, women and children.

"Wait until we are grown up, Ned, and then we'll fire away on this subject and just make folks listen to us," was usually Ruth's winding-up declaration.

"Yes," Ned was in the habit of replying, "we'll fire, but our guns must be aimed mostly at this plan that lets a few men gobble almost everything." The children found plenty of illustrations of what they styled the "gobble system."

"Just look!" said Ned. "Mr. Loken has two automobiles. I don't want his automobiles—I like my legs best—but Uncle Philip says that either one of those machines cost enough to build a town observatory and put a telescope into it. How did Mr. Loken get the money to buy that new touring car?"

"Oh, it grows on a tree down at his mill. All he has to do is to go and pick it off."

"And everybody knows now that Mr. Pierson

spent a pile of money trying to go to the legislature—though he didn't get there, after all. How did he come by that pile?"

"Picked it from the same tree that Mr. Loken got his from. Dividends, you know."

"And that election money was enough, Uncle Philip says, to start our public laboratory. Wish we were grown up, Ruth."

Happily for the joys of the years of youth, they were not grown up; unhappily, the public laboratory where you could draw out a camera was as yet only a dream of their fresh young imaginations; and Ned must think and plan how he could come by a camera of his own. He knew perfectly well that his mother had no money for one, and his paper money must buy him shoes—a boy's shoes do wear out so fast, especially if, besides walking miles to sell papers, he is a trail-maker and goes into swamps a good deal. He rarely spoke of a camera, but his mother knew, and mothers like to organize a surprise now and then as much as anybody does. Mrs. Adams could make famous cakes, various kinds of them. This fact was well known to the Ladies' Union,

to people who gave parties, and to the West End bakery. Every Friday night, after half the family had gone to bed, the mother made a cake or two for the bakery. She was paid enough to cover the cost of materials with a little left over. Slowly and secretly a camera fund was growing. Once Ned became suspicious that something was afoot. "Mother, what was that light in the kitchen for, late last night? And I smelt something good, too, like cakes."

"Oh, you must have been dreaming that you were celebrating Christmas Day on board the *Fram,*" replied his mother carelessly and with much self-control.

It was Ned's habit to drop into the little art store and just look at cameras through the showcase glass and listen to people who were buying them. To hear him talk to Ruth and his mother about films and time-exposures one would hardly guess that he had scarcely so much as touched a kodak. The camera that he had set his heart on and that he meant to have some day—the "some day" that all boys and girls know and talk about—was the very identical one that his mother

had set her heart on; for Mrs. Adams herself had once or twice found time to visit the art store. "Better get the boy a fairly good one," the head clerk advised, "he is worth it." Ned thought that by the time he was fourteen and could work all day Saturdays and every day in the summer it would be right for him to buy a camera. To Ruth alone he confided his concern lest the squirrels should capture the flicker's hole before he had a chance to photograph the birds. Meanwhile, Ned's mother kept thinking, "A few more cakes and the camera will be ready for Ned's next birthday."

CHAPTER IX.

It was a showery day and "nothing doing," as the boys said, on the playground. The forenoon recess found boys and girls grouped at the schoolroom windows watching streams of muddy water run down the banks to the pond where they skated in winter. The end of the school year was approaching and preparations for the final exercises were in progress. The talk naturally turned to that day preceding the spring vacation, a day likely to be remembered for some time on account of the commotion caused by the surprise number on the program.

"What does the red flag mean, anyhow?" asked one boy.

"Oh, it is just an auctioneer's flag, because you always see it where there is a sale going on," replied Jim Pierson.

"Then your necktie is an auctioneer's flag and you are for sale cheap," retorted Ruth Fleming. Ruth was not in the habit of making rude

speeches, but the chance was too good or the temptation too great. Jim flushed and remembered that he had put on his best Sunday red tie that morning, expecting that the scouts were to drill; nothing less than a Sunday tie would do for an officer. When the others had stopped laughing, Jim turned to Ned and demanded:

"Well, isn't Old Glory good enough for you?" He had heard this from a guest at his father's table, and now he repeated it as if it were something very clever and his own idea.

"Good enough, maybe—at least I hope it is; but it isn't big enough," answered Ned.

"Huh, what do you want? The flag down at the square is thirty-five feet long and the pole is about a hundred feet high."

Ned paused before replying, but Ruth did not. "Now isn't that like you, Jimmy Pierson! You can't think about anything unless it is in feet or pounds or dollars—'specially dollars. Ned doesn't mean square feet of flag; he means that the Stars and Stripes is the flag of just this country; other countries, of course have their own flags, too; but the red flag belongs to everybody.

It is the people's flag, and it is red because all human beings have red blood in their veins, and it means that everybody has equal right with everybody else to a share in the earth."

"You don't claim that the red flag is for nig—Negroes?" asked one boy doubtingly, and hoping that no one would notice how near he had come to slipping into a word that was forbidden in the school-room.

"Surely we do! The earth is part theirs and there have been, there are now, some great men among the colored people. I guess you never heard of Professor Du Bois, and you don't know *The Souls of Black Folk*. Father read it aloud to mother and I listened, too." Ruth was going to add that her mother cried and her father himself could not read some parts, but she felt that such things were not to be told in so public a place as the school-room.

"And there was Crispus Attucks," said Ned. "Wasn't he something more than ordinary? You remember O'Reilly's poem that says:

"There is only one guard of equal right—
the unity of blood."

They recalled the poem, for Miss Ford had read it to the school only a day or two ago. Crispus Attucks made them waver in the notion that there could be no room under the red flag for colored people.

"Well, I can see how it might be a flag for Germans and Frenchmen, as your song says; but what about Chinese? Think of Ling down at the laundry," and the girl who spoke scornfully swished dainty white skirts that the despised Ling had ironed the day before.

"But I think it isn't fair to compare people unless they have had equal chances. Now may be Ling never had a chance to do anything but wash and iron."

"Yes," added another, "the chemistry assistant in the High School says there were two Chinese girls in her class in college and they were better scholars than plenty of American girls. Give the Chinese a chance and see if they don't amount to as much as anybody."

"And catch on to the idea of the red flag sooner than some people do who think they are so much better and smarter than the rest of the

world," asserted a boy who was suddenly quite taken with this view of oriental possibilities.

"My country is the world;
My countrymen are all mankind,"

quoted Ned.

"Huh! Whoever said that couldn't have been very patriotic."

"There you go again, Jim," said Ruth, severely. "Can't you ever remember anything Miss Ford tells us? Have you so soon forgotten what she told us the other day about Garrison?"

"Well, what has he got to do with it?"

"Got to do with it? Everything! Garrison said those words that Ned quoted and you would know it if you had been paying attention instead of thinking who would be half-cock on your team."

At this everybody laughed. It was not often that they had a chance to laugh at Ruth Fleming nor did they often wish to. She was a merry girl, generally looking out for somebody else's comfort; and, hence, she did not lack for the good-will and approval of her mates. She now took the boys' derision good-naturedly, laughing

with them at her mistake. Presently one of them began again with the comment:

"But that was a queer thing for Garrison to say. How could the whole world be a person's country?"

"Well, why not? We don't have to live on our guard against the States that bound ours. Why couldn't the people of all the countries agree to live in peace and help one another. In some places there is coal, you know; and in some places cotton will grow and wheat won't, and in other places wheat grows best of anything; and everybody needs coal and cotton and wheat. Why don't they exchange around so that each person has enough of what he needs, and we all be countrymen around the world?" This was perhaps the longest speech Ned had ever made. When he paused, another boy who had caught the common-sense element in Ned's argument commented with emphasis, "Yes, and make everybody work some, so that nobody will have to work more than his share. I don't see why a few men should be allowed to get hold of land that has coal in it and call it theirs and make miners work so hard

to get the coal out and for so little pay; and then those men go and sell that coal for so much money."

"And I guess we have to pay the railroads a lot for bringing the coal to us," chimed in another. "Why don't we own the railroads ourselves? All the people of Hillsburg own Main street, don't they, and all have equal rights to it."

"But that's different," objected several.

"How different? Main street isn't just a cart track, is it? A lot of work has been done to make the street good and everybody had to help pay for it; and even if it was just a public cart road everybody would have equal rights to travel on it. Now, how is a railroad different from Main street?"

"Oh, it's different because just a few men use their money to build the railroad."

"But how do they get their money?" Ned now broke in. "You don't suppose they ever worked for it, do you?"

"No; but maybe some other persons gave them the money."

"Then where did the other persons get it?"

This seemed a fruitless inquiry, and they were all puzzled to know how people who had a great deal of money—enough to build a railroad—got their money in the first place.

"My grandpa," said one boy who had thus far been a quiet listener, "my grandpa lives 'way off on a farm, and he wrote us a letter last fall, and he said he had to turn the pigs into the orchard because it cost more to gather the apples and send them to the city than he could get for them. If the people owned the railroads and each person who wanted to use a railroad paid only what was necessary whenever he did use it, maybe the kids could have the apples instead of the pigs having them. And I s'pose the people pay for the railroads, after all. Grandpa wants to come and see us, but it costs so much he has to wait a long time before he has money enough to pay the fare."

"Be-autiful Baldwins etten up by pigs," sighed one little girl, who looked as if her acquaintance with apples was limited to sidewalk views of the Italian's fruitstand.

Finally they agreed to ask Miss Ford whether

a railroad was more like a private driveway or a public street.

The afternoon proved as rainy as the forenoon, and again the scholars had to keep recess indoors. They returned to the topic of the morning.

"Would you be having the red flag belong to the Spanish and the Russians?"

"Of course!" replied Ruth. "Father says Spain's bad centuries are gone by,—at least they will soon be gone by if she has more men like Ferrer, and if she will let them live."

The eighth grade knew about Ferrer, for he, too, had been the subject of one of Miss Ford's talks.

"And wasn't Ferrer a hundred times as brave as the soldiers that shot him?" continued Ruth with enthusiasm. "Think of him there in the moat, begging that he needn't kneel down and that he needn't have his eyes blindfolded, and him saying to the soldiers: 'Aim carefully; it is not your fault.' Those soldiers ought to have thrown down their guns instead of shooting Ferrer. That's what comes, Jim Pierson, from not reasoning why. For what had he done? His

crime was teaching the people who were so ignorant; and the soldiers the ignorantest of all. I believe soldiers always are."

They looked at Miss Ford, who seemed to be busy at her desk, and into their minds came pictures of their teacher being taken off to jail by a squad of soldiers sent for that purpose. It was slowly becoming recognized by some of the boys that soldiers might do very bad things just because they were ordered to do them. There was plainly something besides glory concerned in being a soldier.

"Well, now, you surely couldn't have peace under your big red flag if both English and Russians were there. Aren't they building dreadnoughts and armies so as to be ready to fly at each other across the—the North Sea?" said one boy, less sure of his geography than of the fact and purpose of dreadnoughts.

"Yes, and our flag means that they are going to quit making ready to fly at each other. They'll have to quit it, those governments will, for it takes a lot of men to build a battleship and a lot more to run it, and if men refused to build it and

run it and refused to go in their armies, then what? You don't suppose the Czar and his body-guard and King George and his fine officers are going to come out and do any real fighting themselves, do you?"

No, nobody supposed that. The eighth grade had read enough about battles to know that it was just the common men, as a rule, who actually fought and got killed. And though their history books nowhere hinted that common men might some day strike and drop the war job, their teacher had set such a possibility clearly before them.

"It looks to me, then," said one boy, thoughtfully, "that your red flag is a sort of school flag; it intends to teach the people not to be made fools of,—not to fight other persons' battles, and not to work at things that ought not to be done."

"Yes, that is so."

"Well," returned a boy who disliked to be convinced, "even if the English and Russians shouldn't scrap, I don't believe I'd care to see Russians in our crowd. Aren't they worse than Spaniards?"

It was now Ruth's turn to speak up for the absent.

"Why, their blood is the very best quality; for they have lots of men like Ferrer who are bound to teach the ignorant, no matter if they do get put into prison, or sent off to Siberia, or get shot."

"Yes, sir!" added Ned. "You fellows ought to know about Kropotkin. Nobody who just makes up stories for books ever could imagine anything equal to Kropotkin's time in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, and his final escape from prison—and it was real." The emphasis on the last word plainly indicated Ned's opinion of the "made up" in literature. The boys were impressed and they started to ask what book told about this real escape, when Ruth broke in excitedly with: "And Madame Breshkovsky! She is the greatest woman and greatest Russian yet."

"Tell us about her! Tell us about her!" begged several, for they knew Ruth's story-telling powers. Before she could begin the stirring history of "the greatest woman yet," or Ned could even mention the *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* the bell on the teacher's desk felt compelled to tinkle,

though for reasons of her own, Miss Ford had given her scholars extra long recesses that day—and it was just as well that no members of the School Board or the Hillsburg Club had been present.

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CHAPTER X.

Summer time was at hand. The West-enders' pond was quite dried up, and Danny Brownley merrily played ball on the spot where Ned had stooped down to pick him up that February day. The maple trees around the school grounds were in full leaf and the tardiest, friskiest robins had settled down to housekeeping. Neighbors leaned over one another's back fences to compare notes on peas and beans and to see how strawberries were coming along. People who owned the finest places in Hillsburg went off to other fine places in the country or took themselves, some to distant mountains, others to the seashore.

"Hillsburg is such a factory place; it isn't fit to stay in, in summer," complained the eldest daughter of the senior partner of the Pierson Manufacturing Company as she directed the packing of her trunk; "yet it is always such a bore to decide where to go."

If Mrs. Adams longed for the lost garden she

did not let Ned know it, and if Ned fairly ached every night to be going to sleep in the country so that he might wake up to look out into tree-tops above green fields he did not let his mother know it—at least, not often. There seemed to be no other way but to stay in the millinery store home and try to coax some extra blossoms from the begonias and geraniums that filled the south window.

Mr. Fleming had been away several days to repair the plumbing in one of those fine summer places, a "cottage" some forty miles distant. When he came back he had pleasant news.

"A chance for a bit of camp-life, girls," he told his wife and sister. "It seems that the Weltons had a hunting and fishing lodge up there on the lake before they built the big house. Mr. Welton says that if we will straighten the place up a bit, so that he can rent it to another party later, we can have it for two weeks and he will consider himself fully paid. I went around and looked the lodge over: two rooms with a lean-to; a couple of old tents and a number of cots stored away overhead; enough dishes for oatmeal and milk, any-

how; and a canoe that I guess I can patch up. The location is beautiful and neglect has really added to the charm of the camp. It is wild enough to suit even Ned, and is quite away from other camps and civilization generally. Besides the week the firm allows me, I will tell them I must have another. Now, Margie, can you get off?"

Margie thought she could; it was the dull season and the restaurant should be able to spare her.

Philip Fleming looked keenly at his sister and commented to himself: "What a cursed system that makes a woman work ten hours a day and gives her half a wage." His words out loud were: "It's settled then; let us go the first two weeks in July. Tell the children."

"Yes," assented Mrs. Fleming, "let us take the first two weeks in July, especially on the children's account. We may well be glad to have them away over the Fourth. There is never, any year, any peaceful Fourth on these streets, and it will be worse than ever this year, with the boy

scouts and that sham battle they are preparing for."

A few hours later Danny Brownley burst on excited tiptoe into his father's consultation room.

"Daddy, Daddy, dear! Ned is going to camp, and Ruth, and all of 'em; and Mrs. Fleming thinks I might go if you and mother are willing; and please, dear Daddy, mayn't I?"

After Danny had calmed down and given such particulars as he was able to offer, Dr. Brownley said he could "make no promises, but would go and talk it over with mother." This talk must have amounted to something, for on the following day Mrs. Brownley went to call on Mrs. Fleming, and after her return Dr. Brownley walked down to the shop in the rear of the hardware store. After explaining what brought him there the doctor said: "Now, if Mrs. Fleming could find it convenient to take Danny along we should be grateful. And, of course, I want to put the matter on a proper business basis." He named the sum usually paid per week in boys' camps. "Would you think that all right per week?"

"More than all right, Dr. Brownley. We should be happy to have Danny go as our guest."

"Oh, well; this is mere business, and it costs something to live in camp—as it does everywhere else. I'll just send you a check by the morning mail. And your kindness in taking the boy with you is not needed to remind us anew of what we owe your family—a debt we can never repay." The doctor stiffened a quiver out of his under lip and hurried off.

Ruth and Ned and Danny held a jubilee. Even Baby Philip, three years old, danced with glee, because he was "doin' to tamp." He didn't know what going to camp meant, but it must be something good, to make Ned turn such wonderful hand-springs around the clothes-reel in the back yard.

The pleasure of the holiday really began with the getting ready. The question, What to take, led to lively discussions which lost none of their animation from the fact that there was small room for choice. They would have few, if any, of the articles especially designed for people who frequently and easily exchange town life for life

in the open and the wild. The familiar old blankets and old shoes and old shirts were put on the list; but Ruth was certain that Aunt Margaret's bread, baked the last night before leaving home, would be extra delicious, and Ned hadn't a doubt that Aunt Emily would make a big lot of fresh ginger cookies.

"It will be so different from our picnics on Lookoff, because we won't have to pack up baskets and things and come back to town at the end of the day. We've always wished we could stop on Lookoff over night, and this will be doing it, only better. Which do you s'pose is pleasantest, Ned, to camp high up on a lookoff sort of a place, or down low, beside water?"

"We won't know, Ruth, until we've tried both."

In the Brownley home the deepest seriousness prevailed—when Danny was not there. Mrs. Brownley and Miss Juliet Brownley, the doctor's sister, were more absorbed in getting their youngster ready than if they themselves had been preparing for a trip to Europe. It was so important that Danny should have just

the right outfit. In the lad's own view there was only one standard and one test for everything proposed: he wanted exactly what Ned was going to have, article for article. As often as he could get permission he went trotting down to Ned's home to learn every item of the plans there. The reports that he brought back had a disquieting effect on his mother and his aunt; they questioned whether any members of the party realized what would be needed in camp; but then, their responsibility extended no further than to the proper equipment of their own small representative. As for Dr. Brownley, he said carelessly: "Oh, give the boy an extra pair of corduroys; those he goes in won't be fit to come back in. Roll up a flannel shirt and his old sandals and he's all right. Yes, and by the way," he added, "put in outing flannel pajamas." Danny was given to "sleeping in his skin," as he expressed it. For this reason his mother went every night and safety-pinned him between the sheets; then his Aunt Juliet would slip in and add more safety pins. Consequently, every morning somebody

had to come and free the imprisoned boy. "I hope mother doesn't tell Mrs. Fleming how I am put to bed," reflected Danny, "and Ned will never think of old safety pins." Ned and Danny had been promised one of the tents for their very own.

The mention of outing flannel pajamas as desirable for her nephew suggested nightcaps, bed slippers, flannel sheets, to Miss Juliet, until at length her thoughts worked their way around to a sleeping-bag. She had heard of sleeping-bags and Danny should have one—it would be such an addition to his bed. She went to the secretary of the Ladies' Union, but that person could give her no information about bags. "We have never made any for the foreign or home field; they are expensive, I believe," was all the secretary had to say. The next thing was to write for camp outfitters' catalogues. These came promptly, and Miss Juliet could have been seen poring over certain pages as if they were those of a fashion book. "Blankets and cover both fitted with attached loops and eyelets which lace up in an unique manner

across the foot and up one side." The perplexed lady was quite unable to guess what that unique manner of lacing up could be. She at length declared that she could plan just as good a bag herself, and she set to work. A down puff was wrecked to make a thin down quilt; this formed the basis. It was covered with soft flannel, and a blanket was added to one side and a chrysanthemum-patterned chintz to the other. The final result was a bag partly sewed up, partly tied up with ribbons that matched the chrysanthemums in color, and partly buttoned up with great wooden buttons covered with pieces of the chintz. Miss Juliet believed she had come within a sufficient degree of nearness to the catalogue bag of cryptic description, and if not exactly her own invention it was at least her own workmanship. But one aunt can make a sleeping-bag, while twenty of them may not be able to get a boy to enter it—voluntarily. Danny could not be persuaded to try his sleeping-bag on.

"Aunt Juliet, how'm I ever going to button it up, and when I'm buttoned in and tied in,

how'm I ever going to get out? Supposin' something exciting happened in camp: a bear or a snake, an' I wanted to get out quick; what would I do?"

"Danny, travelers do have them, and of course they get out somehow. Now, please promise to try it."

Danny would not promise, and thus matters stood until the day came for packing the holdall that had been brought forth from the trunk room. Quite regardless of the fact that the doctor had already expressed his opinion, his wife and his sister called him in to say whether he thought they had got everything Danny would need. There were three kinds of towels, four kinds of shoes, pairs and pairs of stockings, thick shirts and thin ones, caps and coats and pajamas, and, over everything else, the sleeping-bag.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the doctor as he surveyed the pile of things on the lounge. "Do you think the child is going away for two years? Do you think he is to camp in the arctic regions and the tropics, too? Here, this is what

he needs," and he selected a few articles, to which he finally added the sleeping-bag. When Mrs. Brownley hesitatingly rescued some little shirtwaists from the rejected heap the doctor said, "Yes, those might go, too." "Juliet means all right and she is overfond of the boy. I couldn't hurt her feelings by throwing out that bag," he observed later to his wife; and still later, when there was opportunity, he remarked to his sister, "Now, Danny will never wear those starched shirts in camp, never! But Mary is naturally anxious; we mustn't discourage her if she thinks the boy should take town clothes." It will thus be seen how the doctor managed, or thought he managed, his women folk; and one may guess at some of the features of his own personal school of medicine. Each of these women had known Daniel Brownley about forty years, and for forty years they had not so much yielded to his judgment as used it in place of any of their own; and all their views and opinions—except such as related to patterns and recipes—would have shown, if closely examined, the stamp: Approved, D. B. It is therefore the

more surprising that when Mrs. Fleming opened Danny's luggage in the lodge she should have had so much reason to be astonished at the possibilities of an English holdall. More than once during the weeks in camp Mrs. Fleming and Mrs. Adams laughed like two girls—nobody being around to catch them at it.

"Oh, if Miss Brownley could see Danny now!"

"Well, he is happy; let him go."

"But, Margaret, did I promise that I would see that he dressed for dinner?"

"Emily, we must stir up that holdall or Mrs. Brownley will know that it was never unpacked."

Having settled, as he supposed, the matter of the outfit, the doctor next intercepted the boy who took the driveway with a hop, skip and jump. "Daniel, come with me."

"Yes, Father."

"Whenever Dr. Brownley said "Daniel" his son said "father."

In the privacy of the consultation room the doctor began: "Daniel, this is the first time you have gone off without father and mother, you

know; and you are to be a very good boy. Mr. Fleming is to be your Uncle Philip while you are gone and you are to obey him in everything; and especially you are to try and not make Mrs. Fleming any trouble."

"Yes, Father—and oh, then! Mrs. Fleming is my Aunt Emily and Ned's mother will be Aunt Margaret; so I've got two aunts besides Aunt Juliet." Danny was so absorbed with the idea of these new relationships that he forgot he was "Daniel" for the time being.

"And I wish, Daddy, that Aunt Juliet was going to some camp somewhere and needed that old sleeping-bag herself; wisht she was."

"I was about to speak of that, Dan," said Dr. Brownley compromisingly, with a twinkle in his eye that barely fell short of being a wink. "Now, if you shouldn't find the sleeping-bag exactly—er—comfortable, I don't suppose you need actually get into it; just put it on top of your bed, and that will do. But mind you! No sleeping in your skin. Fellows that go in swimming in February have to wear night clothes for some time afterward."

"Yes, Father."

It was a merry little party that gathered at the railroad station the next morning. They had two trunks full of bedding and extra clothes and one full of provisions, cooked and uncooked. Ned and Ruth and Danny had each a pair of shawl-straps with a roll of personal belongings. Danny had packed his small roll himself; it represented the only part of his luggage in which he had any interest, and consisted of a sleeveless jersey wrapped around a box of fishing lines and hooks, and four bananas. Besides his roll Ned carried his precious new camera slung by a strap across his shoulder. All the Brownleys were there to bid good-bye to Danny, who was just beginning to realize that his mother was not going. Mrs. Brownley explained to Mrs. Fleming, out of hearing of the others, the history of the sleeping-bag.

"My sister set her heart on it, though I hardly think Danny can use it."

At the same time Miss Brownley assured Mrs. Adams that Danny's brushes and slippers and soap and handkerchiefs and ties had not

been overlooked, for she had seen to them herself. In another private conversation, Dr. Brownley said to Mr. Fleming, "I shall be glad if you will encourage our boy to try wading in the shallows; that lake has some good beaches, I believe. I am a bit anxious lest his nerves may have got a shaking so that, all his life, he is going to be afraid of the water."

Mr. Fleming promised to see what could be done. It would be strange if Ned and Ruth between them could not convince Danny of the fun of playing in the water. He did not think it necessary, however, to tell the doctor about a new pair of water-wings that had been tucked into a corner of one of the trunks.

"The first picture I take shall be our party here at the station; it is for mother." So all except the eager photographer had to quickly group themselves before the train arrived.

"Oh, Ned! Come, stand by me and let father press the button this one time." Danny's suggestion was acted on and in the subsequent judgment of the children the only imperfection

in the picture was that it did not show the camera.

"I want a picture of the engine, too," thought Ned, and at the risk of losing the train he ran forward and photographed the impatient locomotive.

CHAPTER XI.

The junior member of the Pierson Manufacturing Company felt much abused because business kept him in town the first half of the summer. "Business" meant two or three hours a day in a large office that was airy, shaded and screened. When the great mill-bell rang at seven o'clock for his employes to begin work, for Mr. Loken it was merely a signal to turn over in his luxurious bed and take another hour's nap. When they, tired, toil-stained and perspiring, left the mills at five o'clock, he had already enjoyed several hours on the golf grounds or in his automobile or behind his fine horses. As these employes—old men and mere boys and some women, besides all the strong men—trailed along to their poor, ugly homes night after night they looked over to the great houses among the trees and dully wondered why prosperity was so uneven in this world; but many of them had been taught, in

a quarter where they would not presume to ask questions or demand evidence, that the difference in men's lots is a divine ordering. Others had been instructed from sources scarcely less authoritative that the efficient and competent, however handicapped, always attain to the "room" declared to be "at the top," and they supposed that in some way, not to be understood by ordinary persons, Mr. Pierson and Mr. Loken were naturally superior to mill-hands. If a man was in the lowest layer of laborers, performing the most dangerous or the most disagreeable or the most toilsome tasks and receiving for it barely enough to keep him in work clothes and buy him coarse food, that was accepted as proof that he ought to be down —he was in his proper place.

A number of men, however, in this throng of mill-hands went along without any dull awe or servile resignation, and they did not waste their good teeth grinding them together. "Ours is the toil," they said among themselves, "and theirs the profits. If men cannot resist the temptation to accept prosperity at the expense

of their fellow creatures there is just one thing to do: put the temptation out of their reach—and we are going to do it with the ballot that we hold in these strong hands of ours." But the junior partner kept on fretting because he had to wait until the latter part of the season to motor through France.

"Whom do you think I saw at the station this morning?" asked Mrs. Loken one evening as she shook out the laces on her sleeve, preparatory to pouring after-dinner coffee.

"Well, not ourselves off for New York," Mr. Loken answered indifferently as he eyed the rich, strong coffee.

"I saw that plumber of yours and his family, going for a vacation, apparently. It is queer how these work persons will squander their money. That Mrs. Adams and her boy were along, of course; and the boy actually had a camera. I suppose he has taken the money that he gets for papers—and that he ought to save for a winter coat—and has gone and bought an expensive toy. We had a fine paper at our Union last week—Mrs. Judge Wright gave it—

on How to Teach Economy to the Poor. It is too bad that Mrs. Adams cannot be reached; but you can't teach people that you can't reach, can you?"

Mr. Loken agreed that you can't.

His wife continued: "And the plumber's girl, such a tomboy! Short hair and a blue serge cap that couldn't have cost more than fifty cents. Fancy our Gwendolyn in such a rig!" Gwendolyn's father replied with some emphasis that he wished he could; the bill for her last hat had been twelve-fifty. Then he asked, "Was the girl doing anything out of the way?"

"Oh, no; her manners were quiet enough, so far as I noticed; but she looked so odd. The Brownleys were there, if you will believe me, to see the plumbing party off. They are actually letting their Danny go with the Flemings. I shouldn't think Dr. Brownley would wish to associate with such people—except professionally, of course. Still, for one of the working class Mrs. Adams seems quite a lady, and I must say her rooms were neat as a pin when I called there."

"Did you go socially? You have just expressed surprise at what the Brownleys are doing."

"Oh, of course not! It was on business for the Ladies' Union. You know, we feel quite warranted in calling anywhere where we think we can carry on uplift work. Our pastor wanted me to see if I couldn't persuade Mrs. Adams to serve on the sub-commitee for East China; but I could not arouse the least interest. She is probably one of those women who have no interest outside their own little narrow circle." As a figure of speech and geometry, "narrow circle" was a favorite with Mrs. Loken; she had picked it up at her Union. It passed Mr. Loken's ears unnoticed; his thoughts had wandered back to the grammar school of his day. Though the Flemings had never belonged to his set he remembered Margaret Fleming as one of the gentlest, brightest girls of that far-off time. And now she was a widow, living in a few rented rooms, cooking for a living, and quite without interest in foreign missions; worst of all, she was probably in sympathy with that

revolutionist brother of hers and was allowing her son to come under deplorably bad influences; Mr. Loken remembered the talk at the last annual Club meeting. The much dressed lady behind the silver coffee urn ambled along in monologue; by nature and habit it was easier to work her tongue than her brains. If only someone were present and seemed to be listening she was amiably indifferent to all lack of reply to her miscellaneous remarks. Mr. Loken drank his coffee and thought: Why couldn't Pierson himself have stayed in town if there was any likelihood of a strike occurring in July? Strikes were criminal and should be so declared by law; that would fix the mill mob. They were a low, vicious lot, anyhow. And here he was, forced to get up some kind of a Fourth of July entertainment for them. Whatever else might be decided upon—fireworks or a picnic—the most should be made of the parade of the Boy Scouts, the Scouts commanded by Bert. The sight of real guns in the hands of boys who might soon and easily be transformed into Home Guards—a company of the State militia

—would go far toward cowing the would-be strikers. To put matters on a right basis a town ought to be able at any hour to throw its own armed men into the streets to subdue the lower classes; and the Dick law ought to be so interpreted. Then if workingmen's unions could be declared illegal and a strike criminal, manufacturers might hope to accomplish something.

These kindly schemes for the improvement of municipal and business conditions occupied a prominent place in Mr. Loken's thoughts; and there were several other little points that he could have mentioned, similarly marked by good-will and regard for his fellow-men. But the potential strike was too vexatious a matter to dwell upon long, out of business hours, and when the coffee was supplemented with the solace of a cigar Mr. Loken dismissed from his mind everything connected with his enforced stay in Hillsburg and turned to a study of August sailing dates and road maps of France.

As for Mrs. Loken, she might have gained a more precise idea of the narrowness of Mrs.

Adams' circle if she could have joined a group of men and women gathered that evening at the State capital, a committee they were, apparently. At a certain point in their deliberations one member began:

"Comrade Chairman, we all know something of the work that is being done by Philip Fleming in Hillsburg. I wish to express here my opinion that we ought to get Fleming out into a bigger field, perhaps that of assistant to the State organizer. I was over there not long ago; had a chance to attend one of their street meetings. Fleming has a tremendous hold on the mill-hands and the workingmen generally, in Hillsburg. And it isn't any wonder; he knows Socialism, both the theory and the practice of it. If all of us could teach ourselves as Fleming has taught himself we should have small occasion to worry because we have missed the teaching of the universities. Comrade Fleming took me to his home. Get invited there and meet his wife and children if you want a good time. They live most simply, of course, and deny themselves a good deal, I

fancy, in order to help carry on the work of their Local. But books! You ought to see the books. I never knew before that books went so far toward furnishing a house." The speaker paused and looked out of the corner of his eye to see how this idea struck the women who were present. Then someone asked, "Hasn't Fleming a sister who is active in local Hillsburg?" "Oh, yes, Mrs. Margaret Adams. Her husband was killed, you remember, in that smash-up on the Tri-Valleys some five or six years ago. She is financial secretary of the Club. It was worth something to hear her report. She and the organizer had a plan to offer for getting the workingwomen of the town interested. It is clear that she is a power in local Hillsburg. After the presentation of that plan I wished I could hear her speak at greater length, give a regular address. She has the gift." Then, straightening up to a business attitude, he added, "I move you, Comrade Chairman, that the names of Comrade Philip Fleming and Comrade Margaret Adams be

added to our list of possible speakers for our series of public meetings next fall."

The committee seemed to have entire confidence in the author of this motion, for it was seconded and carried unanimously.

"I hear rumors of a threatened strike in Hillsburg," remarked a member. "Is anything likely to come of it?"

"That depends. If the Hillsburg contingent of those who worship the great god, dividends, only knew it, the Socialist Party Club of the town is all that stands between them and a strike in the very near future. If they will let Fleming and the rest of the comrades alone the mill-hands—many of them, at least—will become educated up to the point of joining the Socialists instead of going on a strike in which the strikers are sure to be beaten. Hillsburg isn't such a very large place, you know, and the owners of the mills have taken care to own also practically all the property available for homes for their employes. In the event of a strike they could, and probably would, eject the strikers' families. On the other hand, the

mill owners realize that they must do their share toward heading off Socialism, for if Socialism prevails it is all up with their profit-making system. Fleming writes me that the comrades have now been denied permits for street speaking, and there is talk of a Home Guard, a kind of graduate corps of the Boy Scouts."

"To defend property and destroy life in doing it," commented another member. "Armed men to patrol the streets; no soap-box meetings. How effective such policies have always been! If Galileo had not been imprisoned and made to recant we might be believing to this day that the earth revolves around the sun. The Hillsburg town managers have certainly adopted time-honored methods for perpetuating the bondage, physical and mental, of the workers."

CHAPTER XII.

People may dine in an elegantly appointed room which is only one of many elegant rooms in a palatial house. The room may be furnished with a quartered oak table and chairs of leather upholstering; food and drink may be served from hand-painted china and solid silver and cut glass. And these persons thus dining may try desperately to make merry, but as a rule they have not earned the things that surround them; they have never really worked or rendered any true service to the world; their "vacations" are merely changes in their forms of idleness—other expensive efforts to have a good time. Oftener than not they call it all a bore and occasionally they suspect that somehow or other real happiness has slipped mockingly from their grasp.

But when a plumber's family goes camping—when the plumber escapes from the black and dirt, from the cold luncheons and heavy lifting;

when one woman looks on far different scenes from those of the dingy back street where her home must be, and another may forget the long day in the odors and confusion of a restaurant kitchen; when one of the party is a girl who irons, and washes dishes, and dusts chairs to help her mother, and another is a boy who tramps miles to sell papers after school, and runs errands for a grocer on Saturdays—when these go camping tea is delicious drunk from a tin cup and potatoes are appetizing eaten with a three-tined iron fork, and their beds of hemlock boughs are restful though spread with blankets that are far from being "all wool." For these people are having the fresh air and the quiet, the let-up from work, that they need only too much and secure only too seldom. To them comes a brief bit of the leisure that only workers deserve and only workers can appreciate.

The two-roomed hunting lodge stood on a lake shore not more than twenty-five feet from the water's edge and was surrounded by maple, beech and hemlock trees. Squirrels and wood-

chucks had been the chief tenants for a season or two and the tall grass had grown close up to the little porch. When all hands set to work it did not take long to make the place look as if somebody lived there.

"But we'll tidy up just enough not to spoil the beautiful wildness of it," said Ruth. "Please don't anybody touch those high blueberry bushes or even the raspberry thicket. We can make windabout paths through them."

Anybody—that is, everybody—fell in enthusiastically with Ruth's ideas about wild shrubbery; so it was no matter that the blade of the brush scythe could not be found, though Mr. Fleming said he doubted whether they were straightening up according to the owner's taste and intentions.

"If Mr. Welton comes over, it is Ruth's job to convince him that the lodge looks better with all those raspberries and young hemlocks around the north end. Now, fellows, some paths," said Mr. Fleming to Ned and Danny after they had dragged forth an old spade and

an iron rake from the hide-away hole under the lodge.

"Ruth, is there any particular place where you would like to have this beauty set out to produce the best effect?" and Ruth's father paused, balancing on the spade a luxuriant Canada thistle that he had dug up in what must once have been the path down to the water.

Ruth looked seriously and critically at the great plant. "Well, we might set it out down there in the sand where I s'pose you are going to make the first fire; but if callers come—Mr. Welton, for instance—they won't understand our system of camp gardening. Father, you please carry that plant very carefully over to those birches and I'll find a place for it in a day or two. Keep the dirt around the roots; they must not be allowed to dry out. It is too handsome and ornamental to be lost."

"Ned, your uncle seems to be specially busy," said Mrs. Fleming, as she watched man and thistle move slowly off toward the birches. "Here is another pail that I've just come across. Please bring some more water from the lake,

We are going to scrub the living-room right away so as to get it dry as soon as possible."

"Caught father in his own trap, didn't I, Aunt Margaret," remarked Ruth as she delightedly watched her father struggling through the weeds and blackberry bushes that bordered the birches. "Now I can help you while he takes care of that prickly old thing." As soon as Ruth was outside the lodge with a pan of dusty dishes Mrs. Fleming said to Mrs. Adams, "What a prank for those two to begin with! And when they get started each tried to outdo the other. Tomorrow I expect to see Philip headed toward the birches with much solicitude and a pail of water—to water that thistle; and you'll hear him politely inviting Ruth to go along, and she won't decline, and he will lead her through the worst blackberry briars he can find—pretending all the while that he is so sorry; and quite likely he will insist on a ceremonious planting of that horrid thistle."

"Emily, don't you worry! Nothing so ridiculous is going to happen, and Ruth's dress is safe. Long before she is compelled to tear

through those bushes she will think of some way to get ahead of her father. You know she always does."

"I hope she may, this time; he will deserve it, for he began."

"Mother, don't you think we ought to have dinner soon?" asked Ruth, returning with an empty pan. "I hear Ned and Danny talking about something to eat. Poor Danny is sorry we ate all the bananas on the stage. And we're going to set the table out-o'-doors, aren't we? What keeps father? He'd be handy now to get this table out. Mother! Do you suppose he'll drop down beside the old Canada and take a nap and then come back saying he had to stay there to watch it?" and she went off to call Ned to help her with the table.

"There, Margaret, you see how Ruth would keep up the game. I do believe her father learns mischief from her."

Mr. Fleming had got back somehow unobserved, and he picked up one end of the table while Ruth and Ned took the other. They carried it out to a shady, grassy spot under a

great beech and before long the first camp meal was set forth on it.

"Boost me up to that branch, Ned."

Ned boosted and Danny settled himself in what he regarded a comfortable and enviable position on a thick lower limb of the wide-spreading tree. "I am a bird, Aunt Emily, a tame bird, and I have been trained to eat all sorts of food."

Mrs. Fleming handed all sorts of good food up to her tame bird until he reluctantly admitted that he had had enough. Mrs. Brownley and Miss Juliet Brownley would have been dismayed, but those excellent ladies were not there, and no orders could go to the kitchen for special dishes for a pampered little boy. One thing was certain in the Brownley domestic administration: Danny had not "been trained to eat all sorts of food." And Dr. Brownley was too deeply occupied with the ailing stomachs of other little boys to keep strict watch over a stomach—a young stomach—in his own household, that promised to acquire an ailment. But when a boy is a bird, up a tree, and "awful

hungry" at that, he is likely to forget that it is his rule to refuse plain bread and butter and to disdain hash. The Brownley ladies had been so completely absorbed in the question of what their child would wear in camp that the consideration of what he would eat did not really come home to them until the hour arrived for their own luncheon that day.

"How did we happen to forget it?" said one to the other in a shocked tone. "But it will hardly do for us to write now and make any suggestions. It would scarcely be delicate, would it?"

"No," returned the other, "and quite possibly they may not have conveniences—or materials—for preparing what Danny is accustomed to having. We can only leave the matter to Mrs. Fleming's judgment."

In their mournful opinion Danny was indeed "up a tree"—though that was not precisely the way Miss Juliet expressed it. It was a pity that they could not be witnesses, occasionally, in the days that followed, of the boy's appreciation of plain, homely food, the kind Ned ate and liked.

"At least two hours' nooning these heavenly days," said the man who had been a plumber, as he stretched his rather long self at full length in one corner of their grass-carpeted dining room. "I never saw a piece of brass pipe. I don't even know what a monkey-wrench is."

Baby Philip stretched himself out on the grass, imitating his father's attitude most successfully.

"I nuvver sawed no monkey. Do monkeys be up dese trees, Daddy?" This little fellow's method of learning English was to repeat what he heard, selecting such words as took his fancy and combining them to suit his pleasure.

"Monkeys? Why, yes! There is one now." Philip scrambled to his feet with excitement as his father pointed to Ned, who had nearly reached the top of a tall white pine that had grown its limbs in the open. "Another smaller monkey, too. Watch him climb!"

How hard to be so very little that one could only toil painfully along to a tree to see other boys go up and down; and then to lose one's

sandal and get one's neck scratched with rough grasses on the road. The daddy lying there on the grass must have remembered how rough all outdoors seems when one is only 'most four years old, for Philip suddenly found himself high above the hummocks and grasses and "fistles," and those other boys were being told to come down and learn how to pitch a tent.

After the lodge had been swept and dusted and scrubbed it wore a most cosy and inviting look, yet the newcomers agreed that the sheltering beech tree was better: they would not go indoors at all in the daytime except to cook in the little lean-to, unless driven in by bad weather. When they were finding places for things it occurred to the head housekeeper to drive nails into the trunk of the beech and hang up everything that would hang. "What ideal housekeeping!" said Mrs. Adams as she leaned back in an old steamer chair and watched her niece dextrously driving nails.

"Yes, Margaret, let's never go back to Hillsburg," replied Ruth's mother, who was also leisurely observing the crops of cups, stewpans

and pails that rapidly appeared on the tree trunk. Presently two tents that had suffered more from neglect than real wear stood alongside to keep the lodge company.

"Why do we have those little ditches all around the tent, Uncle Philip?"

"Supposing we had a hard shower suddenly, Danny; what would happen here with the ditches, and what if we did not dig them? Shall we leave your tent plain?"

Danny thought a few minutes and then concluded that they had better have both tents on islands.

The cot-beds proved to be of the saggy type; but someone suggested heaping them up with hemlock twigs. The children set eagerly to work, for that kind of bedmaking was sport. Before long, seven bough beds were spread and seven persons were wishing that night would come so that they could see what it would be like to sleep in hemlock nests in open tents or an open lodge.

"Sven Hedin always spread rugs down in his tent," remarked Ned as he surveyed the inside

arrangements of the tent he and Danny were to have; "but of course it would make a difference being in Asia. These hemlock needles are better anyhow than any rug."

"You have certainly strewn the floor with feathers from your pillow—live feathers, I suppose we should call them," said his Aunt Emily as she gave an extra touch to the bed of the little boy who would tonight sleep out of his mother's reach and care for the first time in his life.

In convention assembled before they left town Ned and Ruth had voted to name the camp Banner Bright, and therefore they brought with them Ned's little flag that had been a feature of so many parades. Before sunset it fluttered above the low gray lodge, with the deep, fresh green of early summer for a background.

"If anybody goes by in a boat they may never guess what this flag means, but we know."

"Yes, we know; and if they look for letters on it they won't see any. The color saves letters for those who know. Don't you remember, Ruth, that man that came the long journey

overland with the dogs to meet Nansen. He was so disappointed because the ship didn't say *'Vorwaerts,'* until Nansen explained to him that *'Fram'* means the same as *Vorwaerts.* Supposing Nansen's ship had to have *'Forward'* on it in all the civilized languages of the world! So it is a good thing nobody ever tried to put any words on our flag. What a lot of words would be needed for so many languages!"

"Yes, and do you suppose there is a lake in the world that hasn't got somebody on its shores flying this flag?"

This started the children off on one of the geographic games which they were continually inventing and in which they found a remarkable degree of delight, considering that one of them had failed to pass in geography. After they had ranged pretty well over the world Ned said, with an air of doubt, "Lake Baikal, do you s'pose, Ruth?"

"Well, Madame Breshkovsky is somewhere in Siberia, and we might just set Baikal down to her account."

"But it isn't likely she would be having any red flag; they wouldn't let her."

"No, they wouldn't; but you remember how proud she stood up at the time of her trial and declared she was a social revolutionist. Can't you just see her in that court-room and not one friend in the whole crowd? If Madame Breshkovsky is by any lake or river it is just the same as if the red flag were flying there."

The girl affirmed this with a finality of emphasis and a flash of her dark eyes that indicated that she too might be quite equal, if need arose, to standing up in some court some day and declaring her political faith.

At nightfall the campers made their first real camp-fire at the water's edge, and Danny had his second lesson in woodcraft.

"You see, Danny, one can't be too careful about fire. Now, if some sparks get into this tall dry grass there might quickly be a fire beyond our control. The lodge might be burned and much other damage done. Some day, after a rain, perhaps, we will clear a place on the

bank and make our fire up there; but, you see, it wouldn't be safe tonight."

Having had the matter thus explained to him, Danny admitted the reasonableness of his Uncle Philip's argument, and he privately decided not to play with matches except in the kitchen at home. A couple of pieces of old planks propped up on stones made good seats and the little party gathered around the blazing sticks. Baby Philip took up his station between his father's knees. In this refuge he was safe from fire and water and the deepening dark under the trees; safe also from certain skirt-wearing persons who were liable to clutch him by his little blouse and drag him back from what they foolishly supposed to be danger or mischief. He resented these seizures as unfair on the part of those who were bigger and stronger than himself. The little fellow had other grievances: Daddy and Danny carried on conversations in words that he could not understand; and Ned helped Danny up that tree and wouldn't help him. But, on the other hand, Ned never made paper windmills for Danny and blew them and

blew them; and Daddy never took Danny in his arms and carried him up and down, up and down, singing, "Oh, dem golden slippers."

The fire burned low, after marking a place on the sand for other fires on future evenings; the twilight was shading into night; Philip Fleming and his little lad were both setting out to walk the golden streets of dream cities when Mrs. Fleming called them back by saying, "Come, you two Philips! We are in camp, but for one of you there is a proper bedtime just the same as ever." The father roused himself, gathered up the sleepy baby, and, followed by the baby's mother, carried him off to the finest bough-bed in one corner of the lodge. "In town people go to bed—unless they are quite elegant —then they merely retire, don't they, Mother? But when they are camping they 'turn in.' This fire has burned down; it's time to turn in. Good night, ladies. Come along, Dan," and Ned strode off toward his tent with Danny close at his heels. This is not saying, however, that Mrs. Adams did not go later herself to see that the boys were comfortable in their new quarters

and particularly to make sure that Dr. Brownley's ultimatum regarding pajamas had not been forgotten.

"To think that they should all go to bed so early," commented Ruth with a touch of disgust in her tone. "Aunt Margaret, let's you and I stay here and enjoy the night and the water."

"Very well, dear," Mrs. Adams cordially assented, "but aren't you a bit curious to know how a hemlock cot feels?"

"Why, yes. Let's go and try our new beds," and the girl who would have denied that she was at all tired scrambled up the bank with all the promptness that her Aunt Margaret wished. Even then she declared she meant to keep awake an hour or two, "just to enjoy the camp when it was dark;" but the soft night wind stole across the lake and whispered to her to go to sleep.

Each succeeding day was declared by the children to be "the best yet." They went berrying and never were there such berry pies as Aunt Emily or Aunt Margaret made afterward. They went fishing, too, and then fish, the like of which

for excellence they had never known before, appeared on the table under the beech tree. Ned found a swamp, much wilder than those he was accustomed to jump through; and—best of all, in his judgment—there were some high hills in the neighborhood that had apparently never until that summer been trailed by the foot of man. Beside the lake and not far from the banner camp a wild ragged cliff crowned by a few storm-twisted pines afforded a resort for a pair of bald eagles. The top could have been easily reached from the rear, but Ned was for scaling the face of the rock—to look into Old Baldy's nest. Only his uncle's wishes kept him from the attempt. "We haven't conveniences here for setting a broken leg, Ned; and, besides, eagles do not like to be bothered by boys, even a friendly, appreciative boy. Guess you had better not go."

Mr. Fleming mended the old canoe, declaring that boat-building was strictly in his line; and they all took turns paddling along close to the wooded shores. There was a time when one human creature more venturesome than the

rest bestrode a floating fallen tree trunk and went with the current of the stream that flowed through his native forest. Since that day his descendants have delighted to go on water in things that float. Ned and Ruth now appeared to be descendants of his in the direct line. Ruth could not remember the first time her father had taken her and Ned down to the little river that gave Hillsburg its waterpower. They went first to wade and later to swim, though they never had the use of any kind of a boat. The canoe was to them now the source of the same kind of pleasure that the log had given to that early ancestor unknown thousands of years ago.

As for Danny and his relations to the water, at first he timidly waded in knee-deep, regarding with wonder the diving of Ruth and Ned and their swims out to Bun rock, as they called a great smooth boulder that stood out of the water at convenient swimming distance from the shore. To Danny, Bun rock seemed just as inaccessible as the cliff where Old Baldy had his perch. Danny was persuaded to try the water-wings; this was more like swimming and

he felt himself more nearly the equal of Ned. By degrees he learned that you don't always go to the bottom—the water seems to be trying to keep you up; at least it keeps up lively little boys with wriggling arms and legs when they have nothing on except the scantiest of bathing suits. The hour came when Danny exclaimed, "Ho! I don't want these old water-wings," and with excitement and pride he was actually swimming a bit. Scrambling out, he assured Ruth that he "hadn't touched bottom from there to there," indicating two stones about eight feet apart.

"That's a fact, Dan," said Ruth encouragingly. "I watched you; you were swimming, all right." After that it was hard to make him stay on dry land. Only the sense that he "must mind Uncle Philip and Aunt Emily" and wait for the swimming hour restrained him from shedding his clothes and putting on his bathing suit and jumping into the water at almost any time when the July sun shone on the fair lake and he was not off with the others on some inland expedition.

"Oh, won't I s'prise daddy good!" was his constant and very proper boast. The others agreed that there would be some surprise in the Brownley family, and they pictured Miss Juliet picking her delicate way down to the river to see Danny swim.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Yes, Ruth and I can take the unused room in the lodge. That will leave our tent for a guest room; but can we manage to rig up another bed, Emily?"

"Everything except warm covering. But, oh, I say, Margaret, I have an idea! Take Danny's sleeping-bag, untie it, rip it open, and there you have the finest down quilt imaginable."

"Just the thing! It is on the ground behind Danny's cot every morning. He declares it is so 'slickery' it goes off of itself. I am sure Miss Brownley won't mind our making a quilt of it when we explain to her."

Mrs. Adams went after the thus far despised sleeping-bag, while Mrs. Fleming wrote a letter. "I do hope she can come; it will please the children so," said Mrs. Fleming as she sealed the letter—which Mr. Fleming put at once into his shirt pocket.

"Uncle Philip, shall I take that letter down

to the stage for you?" asked Ned an hour later when he spied the untravelled postage stamp.

"Well, thank you, Ned; but I guess I'll go along myself, today. Get the pails and we will look for some berries on the way back."

The next day a letter came that seemed to please the grown-up folks, but they did not offer to share their pleasure with the children. Although mailed in Hillsburg the address was type-written and signified nothing. The following day Mr. Fleming again proposed that they go and see the stage pass. "And mother and Aunt Margaret and Philip might come along up the woods path to meet us on our way back."

"It's curious how father has taken a notion to come over to this dusty old road, every day," remarked Ruth, as she and the boys sat down in the shade of some bushes by the bars. "You'd think he was expecting somebody."

Perhaps he was, for just then the stage stopped and Mr. Fleming reached up over the wheel to help a lady down.

"Welcome, Comrade."

"Thank you, Comrade Fleming. I am very glad to get here."

"Hooray! Its Miss Ford!" and the three children rolled through the bars.

That night at the tavern in the nearest town the stage driver gave it as his opinion that "them folks stoppin' down at Welton's old camp must belong to some new kind of religion,—they call one another 'Comrade.'"

"I cannot lose an hour of this blessed freedom," said Miss Ford when the younger members of the party, surprised and proud, had conducted her through the woods and fields to Banner Bright; and she disappeared into the guest-room. The person who presently emerged wore a dark-blue gymnasium suit with heavy, high-laced boots and a white duck hat. Ned looked her over critically and then broke out with frank enthusiasm: "Miss Ford, I wish you would dress that way all the time." Miss Ford laughed. "It would be more sensible, Ned; but what would Hillsburg say—and what would the Board of Education do?"

Much can be accomplished even in a few days

when people know that it must be a long time before another holiday comes. Miss Ford travelled Ned's trail to the top of the great hill; she went fishing once, and berrying each day; and then it came her turn to be leader as they searched Ned's finest swamp through for an orchid that she knew. But what the children cared most to do was to teach Miss Ford to swim; they believed that she could at least make a beginning. Fortunately, their guest had brought a bathing-suit and she was to have a lesson the very first morning after she came. Danny could hardly wait until Mrs. Fleming gave the signal; then he dashed in and showed off his new accomplishment by going into water deeper than that of any previous venture. Ned and Ruth, after a preliminary dive, swam out to their favorite rock—"just to give Miss Ford a few minutes to get used to the water." The candidate for swimming-lessons waded in and splashed about a little; then she clambered onto the diving-rock. "Oh, gracious! Ruth. It looks as if Miss Ford means to dive! Of course she mustn't try that first. Call to her to wait until

we get there." But their warning came too late; she had already taken the diver's position, and then she was gone out of sight. After a few brief seconds she was seen making out to Bun rock with the long, easy strokes of an expert swimmer.

"I hope I didn't give the impression of wanting to show off," said Miss Ford, apologetically, when later she joined the people on the shore, "but it was such fun to surprise the children."

As for Ned and Ruth, they were divided between admiration for their teacher's swimming, and mortification at the thought that they had intended to help her make a beginning in the art.

"Well," said Ned, after he and Ruth had discussed the matter between themselves, "it is better to suppose that some persons know some things and then find out that they don't than to suppose that they don't know and then find out that they do."

"Yes," assented Ruth, "and we will be safest if we suppose that this Miss Ford knows everything. Probably she can skate and ride, too."

"Yes, and has been up mountains that she has never told us about." In Ned's view this marked the limit of outdoor achievement. If his teacher had climbed mountains with snow and ice on them there was practically nothing left for her to plan for or to do.

The evenings around the camp-fire were doubly enjoyable now that Miss Ford had come. A splendid red star low in the southern sky had caught their attention; they declared they had never seen it in Hillsburg. "It surely winks at us, so it shall be our most favorite star." Miss Ford told them the name of their star, and other things about it more important than its name; and straightway the mysterious green companion of the star offered a wide, new field for their imaginations.

"Supposing worlds there, Ned, going about the red sun and its green brother; worlds where everybody is friendly to everybody else, and they don't try to get the better of one another. No bobbins that little girls have to tend and no breakers for boys to work in—the coal all picked over by machinery."

"Yes, and no mines that cave in or factories that burn down. And the people that do the most disagreeable and dangerous work have the shortest hours and the best pay—instead of the way it is here?"

"And everybody lives to be a hundred, at least, and has plenty of time to look at stars and hunt for orchids."

"And the children sit by camp-fires talking on summer nights when they ought to be in their beds, I suppose," added Mrs. Fleming gently.

Miss Ford observed that this was a hint rather than a summons, so she took up the story where the children's imaginations had left off, and everybody listened:

And what wealth then shall be left us when none shall gather gold
To buy his friend in the market and pinch and pine the sold?
Nay, what save the lovely city, and the little house on the hill,
And the wastes and the woodland beauty, and the happy fields we till.

And the homes of ancient stories, and the tombs
of the mighty dead;
And the wise men seeking out marvels, and the
poet's teeming head;
And the painter's hand of wonder; and the mar-
velous fiddle-bow,
And the banded choirs of music—all those that
do and know.
For all these shall be ours and all men's, nor
shall any lack a share
Of the toil and the gain of living in the days
when the world grows fair.

The children knew in what poet's teeming head those lovely and undying lines had been born, for Mr. Fleming had told them about the famous Englishman, Comrade Morris. As Miss Ford ceased speaking, silence fell on the group; then good-nights were spoken and the camp was soon as quiet as if deserted,—but the great red star moved on to the camp's meridian.

The happiness of the two eighth-graders in having their teacher with them and knowing her in the free companionship of camp-life was dis-

turbed by one consideration: in the fall they must leave her and enter the high school.

"I 'most wish we had failed in something—that grammar, for instance," said Ruth one day as she and Ned sat on the edge of the canoe splashing the water with their bare feet; "but we knew it and she knew that we knew it. Anyhow, we must hurry through the high school. I say, Ned, let's put in and do the four years in three. And you know, father is going to study with us all the way through the high, so as to be even with us when we enter the university. Wish father could enter, too; he is such a one to study. He says he is getting old; but he isn't; he has not many gray hairs."

"Ruth," said Ned soberly as he stopped splashing, "do you notice how tired mother seems, now that she doesn't have much to do but sit in that camp-chair under the beech tree? Maybe mother can't stand the restaurant three years more. What if I have to go into the mill? Me for the mill if mother is likely to break down from overwork. I haven't told anybody else

yet, but I met Mr. Pierson on the street a few weeks ago and he stopped me and offered me a job." A queer and unusual feeling came into the boy's throat and a deeply troubled look appeared on his cousin's face. It had never before occurred to Ruth that she might have to go to the university alone, or perhaps not go at all. For it had been a settled Adams-Fleming plan that as soon as Ruth and Ned were through the high school they would all leave Hillsburg and move to some university town where there would surely be a student demand for Mrs. Adams' cooking and where Mr. Fleming might expect to get work at his trade.

Ruth abruptly left Ned and went off by herself to face the mystery of toil and poverty. Yes, it was true: Aunt Margaret just seemed to want to rest; and father—weren't his shoulders beginning to be bent like an old man's Must he always do such heavy work? Mr. Pierson was going to take Jim to Europe next summer. One probably needed a lot of money to go to Europe; where would Mr. Pierson get it all? Why, he

just has a great many men and boys to work for him, and it must be he keeps the most that they earn. If it is worth so much to give them a job why don't they give themselves the job; or why doesn't the town or the State give it to them and then divide that extra money among the workers instead of letting Mr. Pierson have it? Why didn't folks see that there was a fairer way to manage things? The whole matter took a simple, concrete form to this keen-minded girl when she thought of Ned Adams going into the mill to help earn money so that Jim Pearson could go to Europe, and then to a university, and then do whatever he chose.

Must Ned be swallowed up by that mill before he had any chance in the world?—and she saw a picture of Ned as a grimy, shuffling fellow, overworked and underpaid, without ambition, without hope. This could not, should not, be the fate of her brother, her Comrade Ned; and Ruth flung herself sobbing on the pine needles in the clump of trees where she had tried to hide herself. It was here that Miss Ford found the grieving child, and here among

the young pines they sat and talked until Ruth's courage of heart came back, and the teacher had—all within her own mind—some new ideas that were to grow into new plans.

CHAPTER XIV.

The last swimming-hour, on the day before the one when all the Banner Bright campers must go home, was improved to the utmost. The diving exhibit and the swims for speed and for form were over, and the new stroke that Miss Ford had introduced had been practiced once more. Then Mr. Fleming proposed some canoe exercises. That old canoe had never been intended to carry one man, one small boy and two middling sized children; and with such a crew it would require only the least mismove to capsize it. But Mr. Fleming told all three to "pile in"; then they left the shore, Mr. Fleming being careful, however, to keep Danny's end of the canoe in water not over the little boy's head. Two of the three spectators on the grassy bank also noticed that Miss Ford stood waist-deep in the water, only a few feet from Danny; just possibly she was there by pre-arrangement with the one who was paddling the canoe.

"One, two, three, over we go!" and they did; in fact, Danny rolled out just a little ahead of time. With much laughing and splashing they righted the boat and climbed in over the ends. "Never try to climb into a canoe over the side," was one lesson they had thoroughly learned from experience. They thought Mr. Fleming was going to paddle to the landing when he suddenly exclaimed: "Oh, I say, look there!" They all twisted around excitedly to get a view of the sky above Old Baldy's cliff. Over went the canoe, taking the three children completely unawares. Though Danny's head went under, preceding the rest of him, his arms and legs began instantly to work as parts of an excellent little swimming-machine; he swam to knee-deep water, waded out and then sat down in one of Baby Philip's sand-pies to laugh and rest. Mr. Fleming was satisfied. He could assure Dr. Brownley that Danny's water-nerves were all right.

At sunset that last day a particularly fine camp-fire was made and all hands gathered about it. How like a home the camp had be-

come; how tidy the little lodge; how worn the windabout paths; how familiar and dear the ripple of the little waves. But the fireplace, the place for the fire, was the heart of the camp, and beside it they had spent their happiest hours. In proper appreciation of the last camp-fire Ruth had thought of an entirely new game to play: "Going once around can anybody guess who we are and where we are? I will write the answer on a piece of paper and father will keep it until everybody has guessed." She wrote a line, folded the paper and slipped it into her father's coat pocket.

"Now, Miss Ford, you begin."

"I guess we are Robinson Crusoe and some shipwrecked friends of his who have just arrived. Danny and I swam ashore; the others came on a raft that Ned made out of black-boards and clothes-pins."

This pleased the boys. "Say it's right, Ruth!" exclaimed Danny.

But Ruth shook her head gravely. "Miss Ford, do you not see that this is a body of water enclosed and crowded by land? Besides, it is

not salt—is it, Danny? You must have tasted it this morning. Aunt Margaret, you try."

Looking to Ned for appreciation of her guess, Mrs. Adams said, "I suppose we are on Frederick Jackson's Island. We have crawled out of our ice hut for a breath of fresh air. Johansen killed a bear today. I am sure we ate some of it for supper."

"Oh, Aunt Margaret! To think you can't tell fish from bear meat! Danny, you can do better than that. Now it is your turn."

"We are Pilgrim Fathers," said the little boy with an air of importance, "and we are having our first Thanksgiving Day,—and the woods are full of Injuns."

"But, Danny, does father look like a Pilgrim? You remember how they are dressed in your picture-book." "Well, then, Ned knows," said the disappointed Danny who really thought he had guessed right. "What do you say, Ned?"

"I say we are in the Gobi Desert. We have just found water by digging down two feet into the sand. The camels are comfortable for the night,—especially my riding-camel, Boghra; and

there's my tent over there, and I expect to sleep like a top in it—though I've got to pitch camp somewhere else, tomorrow night."

"Ned! That tent is under a hemlock. Hemlocks in Gobi! The idea!"

"I see. Well, Aunt Emily, where are we, anyway?"

"Yes, Mother," demanded the leader of the game, "who are we?"

"I am beginning to be curious about it, myself," replied Mrs. Fleming. "Probably you are Alice and you have built a fire in the wood to keep Tweedledum and Tweedledee warm while they fight. If any more armor is needed they can have anything hanging up on the beech tree."

"Oh, Mother! Be serious and play right." "I appeal to the company if my guess isn't an excellent one," said Mrs. Fleming immediately becoming serious.

"I wish mine had been as reasonable," Miss Ford said fervently, coming to the defense of the keeper of looking-glass armor.

"And besides, Aunt Emily, Ruth herself is

always putting things into that story that don't belong there," declared Ned; "your guess is first-class, and Danny is Tweedledum and I am Tweedledee—and it never rains under this umbrella." Danny suddenly found himself extinguished by one front of Ned's sweater.

"Well, then, I'll take that for mother's guess; but it is not right, for I have in mind a real place and real people."

"Oh, have you," said Ruth's father; "then I'm going in for the real."

"Very well; it's your turn, Father. Now do see if you cannot think."

Mr. Fleming looked meditatively out over the water and finally said, "If we are not any of the parties thus far mentioned I am quite sure that we are primitive men on the shores of an ancient sea. We made this fire by rubbing two sticks together; it is the first fire human beings ever made. We had nuts and berries for supper, like sensible creatures, and we've got plenty more nuts hidden away in our cave which is near by. We are going to close up the entrance to the cave with some big stones, tonight—to keep out the bear who thinks it is his cave."

This narrative made Danny snuggle up a little closer to Ned, in spite of the eclipsing possibilities in Ned's sweater.

"If that isn't just like you, Father! I might have known you would be bringing in your favorite early man. Danny, that bear father is talking about isn't anywhere except in museums and books—"restored," they always label it. And Father, you might know you are wrong, because the only nut-trees hereabouts are beeches. Fancy making a meal off those little three-cornered beechnuts! Does everybody give up?"

Everybody did.

"Now, Father, please read."

Mr. Fleming took the piece of paper from his pocket and by the light of the fire he read: "We are Robin Hood and his band in Sherwood Forest."

"Of course we are!"

"Sure!"

"How stupid of me not to guess that!" were the exclamations that greeted this announcement.

"Well, one of the band,—perhaps it is Friar

Tuck—has eaten and drunk, and is now fast asleep. He must be seen to his bed of boughs. Little John, will you attend."

The game was over and as soon as Baby Philip's father and mother returned from the lodge the group settled down just to talk, as people have always talked, according to their kind, around camp-fires and hearths.

"Uncle Philip, don't you suppose we could camp here at Banner Bright again next year?"

"We'll try hard to arrange it, Ned." "And oh, Father! I wish all of our Junior Club could come. Just think where some of them live,—in dingier streets than ours.

Mr. and Mrs. Fleming had been in conference with Mrs. Adams and Miss Ford, planning for the very thing of which Ruth now spoke: how to secure a few weeks of camp-life for a certain company of Hillsburg boys and girls. That plan had become an inspiration that would reach through the long, toilsome year ahead of these four persons.

"Father, do you really think there will ever

come a time when the boys and girls everywhere will have a fair chance?"

"Yes, Ruth; the day of the mending is dawning. There are signs that may well fill us with hope. The better day will probably come by degrees; and yet sooner, much sooner, perhaps than we think. Our part is to do all that we can to hasten its coming."

"Miss Ford, is being a teacher the best way to help people?"

"Teaching is good work. I am glad it is my profession; but professional teaching is far from being the only way—often it may not be the best way—to help. And remember, Ruth, that you do not have to hold an appointment from a school board or from college trustees in order to teach. Now, I suppose there isn't any one in Hillsburg who is doing more good as a teacher than Comrade Philip Fleming is, with that class of young men." It was quite too dark to see how Mr. Fleming took this. Except as a plumber he was not used to praises in Hillsburg, though more than once Ned had heard express drivers, market clerks, and mill-hands

talking about his uncle: "Fleming sure can make things plain and interesting." The *Advocate* in a recent editorial had referred to him as one of "a gang of pestilent fellows whose departure from town would be a distinct benefit to the community." Mrs. Fleming reached out her hand and moved it softly, down her husband's arm, and Ned immediately resolved that when he was a man he, too, would have a class in Socialist ethics; it should be for the young men who hadn't any place to go nights except to the saloon, and who mostly just hung around on the street after their day's work was done. It would be great to be able "to make things plain and interesting."

"By the things we do, especially the things we choose to do, we teach even more than words can," went on Miss Ford. "I happen to know a boy in Hillsburg who drew *Farthest North* from the library so many times that the librarian grew curious about the book and read it herself. Now, she is recommending it to boys who come asking for Henty books."

"Oh, but it isn't any credit to me to read Nan-

sen; he is out of sight of Henty for adventures," Ned quickly spoke up, loyal to his Norwegian hero. "Don't you 'member that time his boat floated off with every last thing in it?"

"Are we to do things for credit, Ned?" asked his uncle. "Isn't it rather that we are to do this or that because it is, so far as we can see, in any given case, the right thing. Why was it that you would not join the "Boy Scouts of America?" And if I remember correctly, people gave you small credit for your refusal."

Miss Ford stroked Ruth's clean, two-inch-long curls and wanted to say, "I know a mother or two who have mustered up courage to cut off their little girls' stringy hair and throw away the hair ribbons, because Ruth Fleming wears her hair short," but she thought it just as well not to say anything about it; "let the child go on doing this piece of good in the world without knowing it," was the prudent advice she gave to herself.

"I am rather glad one doesn't have to be a teacher, to teach. I was intending to be an architect, but now I believe I will be an editor

and run a paper. Editors have a chance to teach, don't you think?" The one-time grammar-school girl looked to her teacher for an answer. "'Editors have a chance to teach' indeed. If they so seldom gladly teach they have never gladly learned; and the paper that might be a noble torch to show the way is only a sputtering tallow-dip in unsteady hands."

"Yes," added Mr. Fleming, "the doctrine of the freedom of the press ought to carry with it a provision of obligation to spread knowledge among men; yet most editors are merely mouthpieces for those who consider themselves the master-class—and their opinions master-opinions."

"A noble torch to show the way," said Ruth repeating her teacher's words slowly and thoughtfully; "but some one must go on ahead and make a way. I will be an editor and my paper shall be the people's paper. I will call it the *Trailmaker*— I am naming it after you, Ned—and no person shall have a word to say in it except those who speak out for bobbin girls and breaker boys, and for everybody who has

to work too hard and doesn't get paid all he earns. And I'm going to have one whole page for our scheme of public laboratories."

To hide her feelings, perhaps, Ruth sprang up and put another stick or two on the fire. Philip Fleming watched the graceful, energetic figure and his thoughts were the far-traveling thoughts of a man who looks into the future and sees his child doing for humanity what he himself is not permitted to do. "Between us we will get in a day's work," thought Fleming. "I am a plumber; Ruth will edit the paper in my stead."

After the fire was mended the girl dropped down beside Miss Ford again and remarked with an air of resignation, "and just now I s'pose it's part of my job to be patient with Jimmy Pierson."

At this, Ned rolled over and over on the grass, chuckling anew with every turn. When he could sit up and speak he said, "Oh, Aunt Emily! You ought to see Ruth be patient with Jim. He is afraid of her—if he isn't of me. Isn't that so, Miss Ford?"

Fortunately, Miss Ford did not have to answer, for Mrs. Adams spoke promptly, "You are right, Ruth. Make allowance for Jim if you can. I fancy he doesn't get much help at home."

"And he lives in the finest house in town. Things are a mix-up," concluded Ruth.

Danny thought their guessing game was fun; he enjoyed it all—even the scarey part of Uncle Philip's guess. But the talking afterwards did not interest him, for the same reason that the baby did not like Danny's talks with other big people; so the little fellow had leaned up against Aunt Emily and gone to sleep. The camp-fire was dying down in spite of recent mending; and the moon, several days past full, was just throwing its advance light through a gap in the hills to the southeast. Presently Mrs. Adams began to sing,

"The people's flag is deepest red,"

and of course that started the others. Nowhere else does singing sound so sweet as beside quiet waters at night when singers sit around a camp-fire. And they all sang extra well, for it was the

last time they could "raise the scarlet standard high" on that shore for many a long month, if ever again.

After the *Red Flag,* some one—it may have been Miss Ford—started *L' Internationale.* The music of the world's proletariat always excited Ruth and Ned to such a degree that they could not possibly sit still; so they jumped to their feet the better to sing:

> " 'Tis the final conflict,
> Let each stand in his place,
> The international Party
> Shall be the human race."

"Where are we now, Ruth?" asked Miss Ford after all the verses had been sung. "In Brussels, or Vienna, or Chicago?"

"Not Paris!" replied Ruth, quickly. I know the *International* is forbidden in France. Oh, let's sing it while we've got a chance here"; and again they sent the chorus over the waters and through the woods.

"It needs a thousand voices for that," said Ned, discontented with himself because he could

not make a larger volume of sound—and he had done pretty well, as it was. "Yes, a thousand and then some more, and all the instruments that brass-bands ever have."

"And a few pianos and a pipe-organ, I suppose," said Ruth's mother smiling at the child's enthusiasm.

"Oh, yes! pianos," said this eager, yet self-controlled girl, who had never told a soul how much she wanted to learn to play a piano. "Father must not know," she always said to herself. Then she went on:

"Miss Ford, whenever Miss Drewson plays the *International* for our Junior Club it seems to me there is so much bass and other parts that the air just goes like a thread through the music."

"Yes, I believe that is the impression it gives," commented Mr. Fleming; "the air has about the same relation to the whole that the women in the Socialist Party have to the entire membership; but what would the *International* be without the air."

For people who must break camp and move

tomorrow it was high time to turn in, and they reluctantly left the fire, now a mass of embers.

"Isn't this the beautifulest place in the world, Miss Ford, and don't you like surprises?"

"It is very beautiful, Ruth; and I believe I like surprises."

Ruth was thinking of the camping vacation as made up of a series of surprises; but Miss Ford was thinking that except for that surprise just before the spring vacation she might never have found these dear friends and comrades.

"Uncle Philip," said Danny the next morning as they rode along in the stage and caught their last glimpses of the lake, "Uncle Philip, did you really see Old Baldy just as the boat tipped over?"

"Why, no," replied Mr. Fleming, slowly, as if he were trying to remember; "it was merely a hawk. Did I mention Old Baldy?"

CHAPTER XV.

"I just simply cannot make Elinor out. She told me, as late as last March, that she was planning to go to a summer school and finish her work for the second degree. An old English degree it was to have been. Now she has thrown Old English to the winds. Don't mention any old language and literature to her! The only study worth while is sociology. And she did not go to the summer school, either. Since the twentieth of July she has been out on that dairy farm. An inexpensive way to spend the long vocation, to be sure; and I suppose Elinor has nothing to depend upon except her salary,—but she doesn't need to economize all that! I spent a day out there on the farm with her. She had a pile of books written by a Professor Ward,—Lester F. Ward, I believe the name is. Elinor says she is determined to know the sociological, as well as the economic and historical basis, for Socialism."

"Socialism! That may give us a clue to an explanation of her sudden resolve to exile herself to a dairy farm for the summer."

"Perhaps it does; and now she has formally joined the Party—whatever that may mean. I saw a red card on her mantel to prove it."

"Joined the Party! People don't join the Republican or Democratic party, do they? They just vote the Republican or Democrat ticket. And then, as a woman she can't vote, anyhow. What sense in joining the Socialist Party—if it is a real political party."

"Oh, it's really political enough, I guess; and she actually prides herself on being a 'party member.' I cannot make her out."

"But aren't socialists about the same as anarchists? What will the School Board do when they know about this new affiliation?—and Elinor Ford is not the woman to conceal any such step, once she has taken it."

"Do you need to be reminded that the School Board people had their lesson last spring? They will not try to discipline the eighth-grade teacher of the West end again in a hurry. As we very

well know, her boys and girls are devoted to her; hence, the parents are; hence, the Board is helpless."

"Yes, helpless. If they drop her, some of them may be dropped with a thud at the next town election—and deservedly. Besides what she is to all of the children, don't all of us grade teachers in this school recognize Elinor Ford as our leader? She has come to my rescue more than once, with wise counsel and encouragement for which I cannot sufficiently thank her."

"Well, I warn you not to let her know that you think socialism and anarchism are 'about the same thing.' I confess I thought so, too, until I picked up some other books I saw on her table; she has an armful besides those great sociology books of Professor Ward's. I read the Socialist Party Platform, too; read it carefully—it isn't very long—and I couldn't find a trace of those dreadful things that people charge the Socialists with: 'breaking up the home' and 'destroying religion,' you know. Elinor advised me not to read any more; she says that 'he who reads is lost.'"

"Which was just her scheme, probably, to get you to read more."

"And I did. I went far enough to discover what seems to be a favorite idea of the Socialists; they are against the profit system; they hold that profits are wrong."

"Profits wrong!"

"Yes, dead wrong. Elinor says that if one person consumes a dollar which he has not earned, another person has earned a dollar which he does not consume."

"Is that what the profit system means?"

"It appears that it is,—when you come to think about it. Elinor quoted Wendell Phillips; as I remember, it was this: 'We affirm as a fundamental principle that labor, the creator of wealth, is entitled to all it creates.'"

"Do you suppose Wendell Phillips ever said that? I have always understood that the one object of his life was to secure the abolition of chattel slavery."

"No, it seems that after the Civil War he took up cudgels in behalf of the laboring classes. And

Elinor quoted Lincoln, too, as saying much the same thing as Phillips."

"Constance! I cannot believe it. Why don't the eulogists of these two great men tell us this if it true?"

"Possibly the persons who make books and edit magazines and deliver eulogies have their reasons for not letting the people know what has been said in such high quarters about labor. It certainly looks as if both Lincoln and Phillips might be Socialists if they were living today."

"Don't tell me any more; I am becoming confused. It is best for us not to know these concealments of history if we are likely to acquire Elinor's way of looking at things."

"Yes, he who learns is lost. But you yourself just now confessed to Elinor's leadership."

"How can I help it? I freely admit that she knows more and is more progressive than I am. Some people think Miss Ford is exclusive and what might be called over-dignified; but we know how friendly and large-hearted she really is. The children do, too,—and you cannot deceive children."

"Well, if she seems aristocratic it is wholly on the surface. She must have a capacity for democratic feeling, else she wouldn't be so devoted to that 'local Hillsburg' as she calls her Party Club. She has come in, again and again, this summer to attend the meetings, and I suppose there is not a man in the Club who would lay claim to belonging to the upper class in this community."

"And she considers them all 'comrades'?"

"Yes, calls them comrades. Judging by her, Socialism is queer in the effects it produces in a person. And say what you will, her obvious economy this summer indicates some scheme."

"If she has one she cannot conceal it from us indefinitely."

In this fashion was Miss Ford discussed by two of her fellow-teachers a few days before the opening of school in the fall. They scarcely guessed how large a place their own well-being had in the "scheme" about which they were so curious. It chanced to be the evening of the very day of this conversation that Miss Ford went around to the Fleming home. Ruth was at her

Aunt Margaret's; but Miss Ford had not come to see Ruth. At the close of a long conference with Mr. and Mrs. Fleming, as she was about to leave, she said, "Don't tell Ruth—not yet. If there is such a thing as getting even with that child in the matter of surprises this is my chance; and we will let Ned tell her when the time comes."

"Oh, yes! Ned," replied Mrs. Fleming; "and he must be consulted as soon as anybody. He is thirteen now, you know, and considers his mother in his care."

"He certainly does," added Mr. Fleming; "the boy came to me the other day to ask me if I didn't think he had better go into the mill 'to save mother.' He actually thought I'd let him." Fleming spoke with a quiet sadness, remembering his own wronged and robbed boyhood and that of his dearest chum, Ned's father. Then he added: "Miss Ford, you don't know what you are doing, through this plan of yours, for one who has left us—and for those who may come." As a seer, Philip Fleming was ever seeing visions of children's children; as a man of science he

was ever searching for present conduct that should operate causally to unfetter and ennoble the lives of those children of his visions.

It did not suit Miss Ford to listen to anything that so clearly implied praise; so she only said, as lightly as she could, "it won't be hard, I fancy, to win Ned to the plan. Good-night, Comrades," and hurried off.

The next morning Miss Ford called on a real-estate agent and discussed with him the terms of rental of certain houses not far from the West end grammar-school building. Returning to her room she wrote and dispatched notes to a number of teachers bidding them come and drink an important cup of tea with her in the afternoon. Evening saw her starting out again, bound this time for the home over the millinery store. Ned had gone around to his Uncle Philip's, but Miss Ford had not come to see Ned—any more than she had gone to see Ruth the night before; there was a plan to be submitted to Mrs. Adams.

"The business part of it takes just this shape: here are the items per month for rent, heating,

lighting, food and incidentals. I have talked it all over with Mr. Fleming and he says these figures will do it. You are to have a helper. We refuse to go into the enterprise if you try to do all the work. Very well; put this amount down for your helper per month. Now, further. It is in the public school here as in the schools of most towns of the size of Hillsburg: the superintendent gets a handsome salary and the high school principal has a very fair one; what money is left over is divided among us women teachers. Our salaries are uneven; some of us receive more, some less. Miss Drewson, the chemistry assistant, is one who receives less. They think they are justified in paying her the wage they do because she is a new-comer in the school; yet she is worked to the limit. I do not see how she can have a cent left over; they seem to think it enough if she is just able to meet expenses. But under this plan of ours she will certainly have an advantage as regards her board bill. The average of the monthly pay of us five teachers is this. For your services you certainly ought to receive as much as we

average. Very well; let us put that down with the expenses. All items total this. Divide by six and you see what it is going to cost us per person per month."

A brief consideration of the figures showed Mrs. Adams how much better off she would be, financially, at the end of a month than she was on her present restaurant wages—to say nothing of what was to be gained in other ways than strictly financial ones.

"But there is Ned, Miss Ford. Surely I ought to pay more than the rest of you on his account."

"Bless the boy!" said the eighth-grade teacher, a note of tenderness marking her tone; "we are agreed that Ned is not to be counted in estimating your part of the expenses. He is only thirteen,—if I had nothing but a crust I'd share with him because of the kind of man he is surely going to be, some day."

"Perhaps he has been telling you about those bills he intends to introduce in the legislature?" Mrs. Adams' inquiry was half pride and half apology.

"He has. I learned all about them the day we went bog-trotting for orchids."

"If you five were any persons but teachers I should be afraid you might spoil my child;"—Mrs. Adams spoke with a seriousness that brought out her strong resemblance to her Brother Philip,—"but I can trust you, as teachers, to remember that a boy is to be taught to think of others before himself; and when there are no other children it requires a good deal of managing to teach unselfishness. My boy is without his sister, you know."

Yes, Miss Ford knew; she knew now about the lovely little girl two years Ned's junior who had been his playmate for three short years when she drooped and fell asleep—with only such a short while to wait until her father came to sleep close beside her.

"But Ruth is a true sister to Ned," continued Mrs. Adams, "and he could hardly care more for her if she were his own sister."

Miss Ford came back to the subject that had caused Ned's mother to speak with concern.

"You leave matters to me, Mrs. Adams. If

I catch any teacher even beginning to spoil Ned with gifts and petting she will at once be admonished. If she persists, her punishment by referendum vote of the colony will undoubtedly be that out she goes to enjoy the comforts of boarding-house life once more. Considering the idleness and selfishness in which many boys are allowed to grow up it is a wonder that there are any manly men at all. I wholly agree with you in your ideas about Ned's social upbringing."

While they talked, Mrs. Adams began to realize that the day of deliverance had come; her hard struggle was over, and that not through charity or luck, but by simple co-operation. She tried to thank the friend who had planned it all.

"But don't you see, dear Mrs. Adams," said Miss Ford, brushing away her own tears, "that this is as great an advantage for us teachers as it is for you. We have starved for a home here in Hillsburg and now we are going to know what it is to have one."

Later, when Ned came in, after Miss Ford had gone he saw that something had happened.

When had his mother looked so excited; yes, and so young and so little tired. "Mother, what is it?"

Then the plans—figures and all—were placed before Ned as Miss Ford had told them to her.

"Hooray! Comrade Mother! A parade, a parade! Oh, what will Ruth say!" exclaimed the boy as he took down the flags. "Sing, Mother! Sing *Hey for the Day,*" and he gaily led their last grand march over the familiar route from the geranium window to the kitchen sink.

The family jubilee had to be postponed until the next evening; they all heard then what Ruth had to say. For the first time in her life Ned had something that Ruth wanted and could not have; it looked like a disciplinary situation for Ruth rather than Ned.

"Edward Fleming Adams! You are going to live in the same house with Miss Ford and sit at the same table with her, every day!" exclaimed the girl, dazed by the magnitude of this privilege.

"Yes, sir-um, I be!" and Ned tossed his cap to the ceiling.

After a while the children calmed down and withdrew to Ruth's little study-table in the corner where they were in the habit of discussing matters apart from their elders. Ruth was not slow to perceive that the new-home plan which was to be such a great gain for Ned incidentally carried with it no small advantage for herself; yet her deepest feeling, after all, was pure gladness because of the certainty that Aunt Margaret wasn't going to work so hard any more and Ned was surely not to be a mill hand. But she concluded she would tell nobody just how glad she was; that is, nobody except Miss Ford. It was only fair to tell her, considering that hour among the little pines when her teacher had seemed so sure that there would be some way found so that Ned need not miss the high-school work in the fall. With a good deal of confidence Ruth now remarked, "You know, Ned, she is my Miss Ford, too."

"Yes, she is; but she won't belong to either of us in the schoolroom any more."

"But you remember what she said, that last night by the camp-fire, about teaching. I think

she will always be our teacher—even when we are ever so far past the eighth grade. And I am going to engage her now to write for the *Trailmaker*. Just think, Ned! Miss Ford is a Party member, and it will be such ages before we can belong."

"Never you mind, Ruth. There is plenty for us to do, right now. We'll fix up some plans that will keep some more of the fellows out of the boy-scout business. You know I've already got two of them selling our papers over on the East side."

"Yes, and we'll ask Aunt Margaret and Miss Ford if we can't have our junior Club at the new house once a month—if not every two weeks."

Anybody who knew Ruth and Ned could scarcely doubt their ability to "fix up plans," and quite half their planning related to the junior Club.

The restaurant proprietor offered Mrs. Adams a dollar a week "raise" in wages and Saturday afternoon off once a month; he saw ways to make up the dollar to himself, and this offer

seemed to him an extremely generous advance; but the patrons of the restaurant were not to enjoy any longer the food that had given the establishment its large degree of local fame. A day or two later, furniture wagons began to arrive at the roomy, comfortable house chosen by Miss Ford. The teachers were furnishing their own rooms and had also joined Mrs. Adams in furnishing the living-room. Sooner than anyone had thought it possible the new home was in running order.

"A piano that is in tune," said the chemistry assistant with a sigh of satisfaction as she drifted from one piece of music to another in the leisure of a late afternoon hour of their first Saturday.

"Not many pictures, but those we have are good," remarked the art teacher complacently viewing the walls of their living-room after her labors for the best effects.

"Never mind pictures and pianos," said the first-grade teacher dropping onto the big lounge; "just think of the peace and quiet and comfort of the place."

"Yes," agreed a fourth teacher, "and we owe

it all to Elinor Ford. Who but her would ever have thought of such a beautiful scheme."

"Yet it would have come to nothing without Mrs. Adams. The things on the table have the same names as the articles of food that we are accustomed to; but somehow they are different."

"Different! You may well say so. I believe I can make my teaching twice as effective with this home to live in."

"And Mrs. Adams is very much more than a preparer of good food. Think of having our home presided over by one so gentle and winning."

"Yes, it's our home. We are not just mere boarders, living wherever we can, around in this town."

"But isn't it curious that Mrs. Adams and Miss Ford are both Socialists," commented the art teacher. "I am not the one to object, though, if they bring their entire Club. Pure gratitude will compel me to overlook their political views and meet them as brothers."

"I understand that some junior Socialists really are coming. Ned wants them Saturday

afternoons once a month; that is, they are coming if we vote to have them. This initiative and referendum arrangement in a co-operative home is something I am not used to."

"Kids coming are they—if we vote it. I am at the piano at their service," said the chemistry assistant; "they are the dear, identical boys and girls who sang the *Red Flag* on that never-to-be-forgotten Friday," and swinging around to the piano again, she began softly to play and sing to herself,

> It witnessed many a deed and vow,
> We must not change its color now.

"It will presently appear that we are under a Socialist roof," said the first-grade teacher from the lounge; "at least that piano promises to afford us plenty of revolutionary music."

As a result of this remark the pianist faced them again. "I tell you what, friends, referendum or no referendum, I intend to teach Ruth Fleming to play. I never saw a child so eager to learn and yet so resigned to the idea that there is no possible way for her to have lessons."

"I suppose you couldn't do anything that would give Elinor Ford more happiness—unless it might be to join the Socialist party. She is immensely fond of those two children, Ruth and Ned, although she never makes any fuss over them. I believe she is afraid of spoiling them."

"Of course! That's her theory. Witness her suggestions that we are not to spoil Ned. But you go ahead, Miss Drewson, and give Ruth music lessons. We vote for the plan this minute. Everybody say 'aye'!" And everybody did.

"By the way, have any of you seen that flag in Mrs. Adams' room? I don't mean the yellow one. 'Votes for women' pennants are rather common now. I have one, myself. I mean the red silk flag over that picture of an engine. Ned informed me with manifest pride that it is his flag. The man beside the engine must be Ned's father; in appearance, Ned is a smaller edition of the engineer. But I wonder why they drape the picture with the red flag."

"Speaking of pictures," interposed the draw-

ing teacher, "do you suppose Elinor would let us have her fine engraving of Morris to hang in this room."

"Perhaps she wants it herself to hold that card that sticks in the frame in one corner. I took the liberty of reading the card."

"What does it say?"

"It is for him that is of a Fellowship to do and not to dream."

Voices were heard in the hall and presently Philip Fleming, Jr., bent on exploration, walked sturdily into the room. Teachers who had agreed that they were to bear themselves with becoming reserve and dignity toward the thirteen-year-old man of the house had made no such promises regarding any little lad of three; hence, without scruples, they simultaneously fell upon him. Just then another person entered and Philip fled to the lady he knew the best and loved the most.

Elinor Ford caught the little fellow up with a sweep of her arm as strong as it was gentle and waltzed a merry round of the room. Then she suddenly stopped dancing and moved to one

of the open windows. What she saw and heard brought to her face a look of peculiar loveliness and nobility, and though her fellow-teachers had seen that expression before, they could not understand it—they only realized that Elinor Ford lived in a larger world than theirs.

"Listen a minute, everybody—and come to the window if you want to see two Comrades of the Social Revolution."

Ruth and Ned, each with an arm thrown across the shoulders of the other, were marching up and down the long piazza whistling the *Marseillaise*.

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